

Inside the Polynesian Pipeline: A Migratory Analysis of Professional Samoan Football Players

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Abstract

While Polynesian players have been a part of the National Football League (NFL) since its early days in the mid-20th century, only recently has widespread media and collegiate (recruiting) attention been allotted to it. CBS' Sixty Minutes did a special on the topic in 2010, stating that men of Samoan descent are estimated to be 56 times more likely than any other ethnic or racial group to make it to the National Football League (Pelley 2010). The growing presence of Polynesian players in both NCAA and NFL football in the United States has led the journey from Polynesian communities to the NFL to be labeled the 'Polynesian Pipeline' by mainstream media. As more individual players are navigating the Polynesian Pipeline through the modern global sports system, there are an increasing number of stories, publications, and media sensations surrounding the lives and backgrounds of these athletes (Bale and Maguire 2014). The backgrounds of these athletes is one of great interest to the sports and sports media worlds, but in the twenty-first century academia has begun to take an interest in the topic, as well. The creation of a perceived 'sports region' around American Samoa - and the Samoan culture itself - has led to the significant increase in attention to the topic. Sports regions, according to John Bale, are geographical locations that are heavily associated with a particular sport, and often produces a disproportionate number of athletes in that spot. This interest has continued to be reflected on the field, as the number of Samoan players in the NFL has continued to rise.

This study explores the migratory patterns undertaken by these players, including both players from American Samoa itself as well as the Samoan diaspora. This study finds that

American Samoa, as well as the Samoan culture itself, emerged as a football ‘sports region’ in the twenty-first century, and that media output and mainstream culture attention to the phenomena had an effect on the recruitment, drafting, and migratory patterns of Samoan players.

This thesis focused on the manner in which the Samoan athletes are portrayed in the media and in the world of sports. Often times, it was the ‘Polynesian Warrior’ image that permeated representations of Polynesian players. This study found that the identification of origins of successful football players ignited media-generated stereotypes, and thus promoted the Samoan people as fulfilling the stereotype of the ‘Polynesian Warrior’ for college coaches and scouts. This was another factor in the perceived creation of a sports region around the Samoan football community.

These concepts were analyzed within the framework of political economy and using hermeneutics. Analyzing the capitalist systems of commodification of labor and people and its relation to producing and influencing migration flows will be translated to the academic sports arena. This theoretical framework is important in order to recognize the direct correlation between the political, economic, and social situations in American Samoa (and among Samoan diaspora), and the football mania of the society that ignites and enables the migratory football patterns taken by Samoan men. This framework was used to analyze the ‘sports region’ concept itself and how its production in the mainstream media affects the commodification and migratory patterns of athletes in the modern day global sports system through the example of American football players of Samoan descent. This analysis could provide a window into the formation of the sports region, and how the sports region and media output of such have affected the recruitment, drafting, and migratory patterns of Samoan football players.

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Chapter One

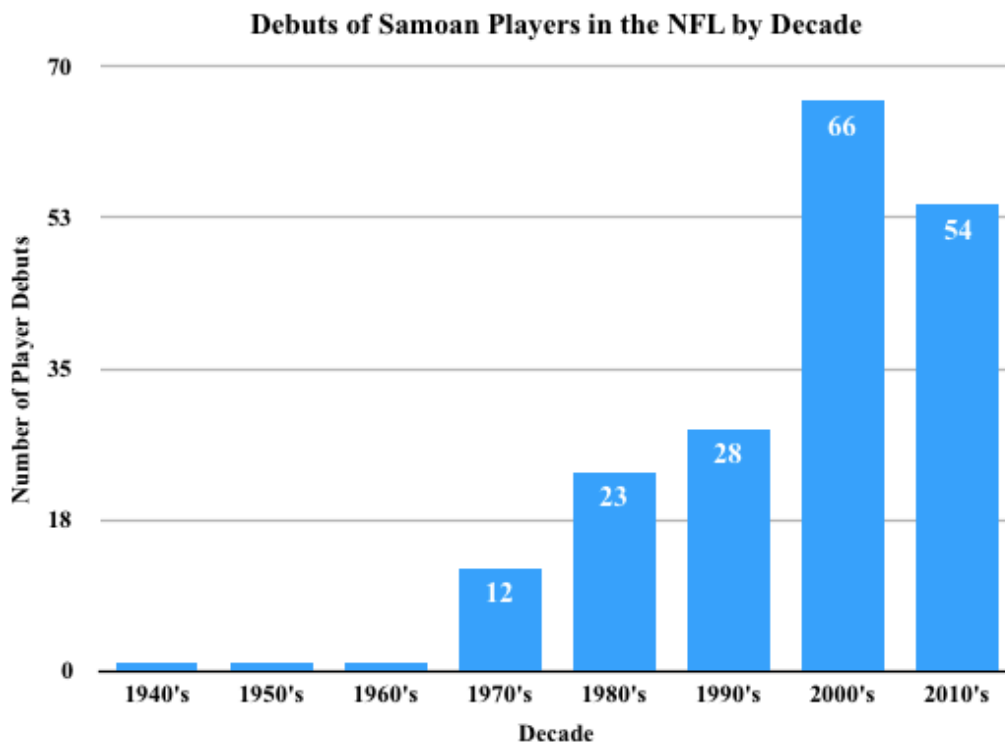
Introduction to the Polynesian Pipeline and the Modern Global Sports System

In recent decades, the National Football League (NFL) has seen many players of Polynesian descent debut in the league. Many of these players, particularly well-known superstars like Junior Seau and Troy Polamalu, are of Samoan descent. The last five years has seen even more highly decorated Samoan players make it to the NFL such as quarterback Marcus Mariota, who delivered a heartfelt speech after winning the Heisman Trophy noting how his home state of Hawai‘i and his Polynesian culture were instrumental in helping him reach this pinnacle of success. “To the Polynesian community, I hope and pray that this is only the beginning. Young Poly athletes everywhere, you should take this as motivation, and dream big and strive for greatness,” said Mariota, the first player from Hawai‘i to win the award. His advice seems to have been taken in stride by other young Polynesian players, as fellow Hawai‘i born quarterback Tua Tagovailoa became the next Polynesian collegiate sensation in January of 2018. Tagovailoa captured the attention of the American sports world as he led his University of Alabama team to a wild comeback victory over the University of Georgia in the 2018 NCAA National Championship Game after he was entered in the game at halftime - immediately propelling him into the national spotlight.

Samoan men are estimated to be 56 times more likely than any other ethnic or racial group to make it to the NFL, and the growing presence of Polynesian players in both NCAA and NFL football in the United States has been deemed the ‘Polynesian Pipeline’ by mainstream media (Pelley 2010). This increase in player numbers has also seen racial stacking of Samoan players at positions along the offensive and defensive lines. Racial stacking - placing athletes in

certain positions because of racial stereotypes - is common across all sports around the world. John Bale makes mention of racial stacking on the baseball field, with colored athletes usually placed in the outfield (Bale 2002). Race and racial stereotypes play large roles in the Polynesian Pipeline and the migratory patterns of Samoan players. Since the rise of the NFL as the premier spectator sport in the United States during the 1960's and 1970's, the number of Polynesian (and specifically, Samoan) players has risen greatly. While there has been a significant number of Samoan players overall, the temporal rate of debutants has significantly increased since Al Lolotai's NFL debut in 1945. Below is a graph of Samoan player debuts in the NFL by decade:

Figure 1



It is important to note that the decade of the 2010's consists of NFL seasons through only 2017, the most current NFL season at the time of this writing. This sample size is thus smaller than those in previous decades. As is clearly visible, there were a mere three players of Samoan descent from the NFL's inception through the 1960's. The 1970's brought about a significant increase in players, four times the previous total appearing in that decade alone. The 1980's again saw a significant increase, almost doubling that of the previous decade with twenty three Samoan players debuting in the NFL. The 1990's remained consistent with the 1980's while still gradually increasing. During the first few years of the 2000's, there was the flurry of media articles produced by ESPN and *Sports Illustrated*, which would coincide with an incredibly large increase in subsequent years. There were as many players of Samoan descent that debuted in the NFL in the first decade of the 2000's - 66 - as there were in every decade in NFL history combined prior to that point. Subsequently, the current decade - only eight seasons old - has already seen fifty four players of Samoan descent reach the NFL. The number of players of Samoan descent in the NFL has consistently increased throughout each decade.

This growth and variation in the player demographics of the league has been of much interest to the media, league officials, and the public alike. The Polynesian football player has been a subject of both media sensation and publications as well as increased interest from the coaches and recruiters within the American football system.

The modern global sports system - the heavily intertwined network of athlete production, migration, and performance within the highly profitable sports industry - has become a major player in the general sphere of everyday life, especially in the United States. The sheer economic value of professional sports has altered the perception of sports and games for many people

around the world, with some viewing sport as a way of upward mobility in regards to their class, sociopolitical, and economic standings. NFL contracts have become increasingly more valuable by the year (the average yearly salary was \$2.1 million in 2016), enabling even more enticement for a potential player to continue pushing for football success (Badenhausen 2017). While the potential to make money as a professional athlete is an incredibly strong pull for young men to pursue a career in football, there is another very enticing reward for football success that presents itself as an opportunity before a player even signs his first professional contract: a scholarship for football, and a free college education.

A full scholarship is life changing for any student or prospective athlete, but especially so for those of lower socioeconomic standing. While it would seem obvious that an aspiring football player would take the best scholarship they were offered, college selection of football recruits becomes a very difficult decision based on a wide variety of factors. While a particular school may covet and heavily recruit a specific player, factors such as the offensive or defensive schemes that the team runs, diversity and experience (or lack thereof) in the coaching staff, or sheer geographical location of the college heavily influence the decision making process of the football recruits, and thus their subsequent migratory paths and patterns.

Sports Regions and Migration

As more individual players are navigating the Polynesian Pipeline through the modern global sports system, there are an increasing number of stories, publications, and media sensations surrounding the lives and backgrounds of these athletes. The media's effect on the sports world - and those individuals living within it - cannot go understated. Using the

mainstream media as a major avenue to examine phenomena such as these, contemporary views have given rise to what are known as ‘sports regions’ - or areas that produce athletes of a specific nature for a specific sport or game.

John Bale wrote of sports as being a representation of the culture, landscape, and people of the area that they represent (Bale 2002). This representation enhances and magnifies the mystique and perception of a given sports region, and also has a subsequent effect on the game or players of the game in the sports region itself. The portrayal and perception of these athletes is one that is created from long histories of imperialism, exoticism, and American colonialism, and this is prevalent in modern day media outlets’ outward portrayals of Polynesian - particularly Samoan - individuals.

In this thesis I argue that American Samoa has become one of these sports regions, and the perceptions of the Samoan football player have carried over to the Samoan diaspora, as well. While Polynesian players have been a part of the National Football League since its early days in the mid-20th century, only recently has widespread media, academic, and collegiate (recruiting) attention been allotted to it. While some work on the Samoan football player has been done in the past, this work was the first study on how the media publications on the topic have affected the establishment of not only American Samoa itself, but the entire Samoan culture as a sports region for American football. This concept of the sports region was analyzed to gauge its effect on the migratory patterns of the Samoan football player.

Research on athlete migration includes a wide variety of topics within the subfield of sports geography. Sports geography is the study of sport from a geographical perspective with focus on the way sport relates and fits in with society as a whole. John Bale wrote of sport as a

class struggle, and how it can represent domination or hegemony of major power groups in society (Bale 2002). The major piece in this regard is the edited volume produced by Joseph Maguire and John Bale that combined multiple case studies of athlete migrations in such areas as talent migration in Latin American sports and the migration of Canadian ice hockey players to Europe (Maguire & Bale 2013). Case studies such as these are supported by individual works that have been published, such as Wycliffe Simiyu Njororai's study on the labor migrations of Kenyan track athletes (Simiyu Njororai 2010). Academic works on the causes or driving forces behind athlete migration are largely based in sociological frameworks, omitting the geographical aspects involved in this thesis (Agergaard & Ryba 2014). This work combines the concepts of geographical sports regions and athlete migration to get a window into the driving forces and nodes behind the migratory patterns of Samoan football players.

Research Questions

The narrative of football and American Samoa is a unique one even in the modern global sports system, intertwined with a history of imperialism, colonization, and exoticism. The combination of these factors, life and opportunities in American Samoa, and the modern mainstream media allow for specific representations of Samoan players, culture and people that are focused on the sport of football. This brings us to the research questions at hand that guided this thesis:

How has American Samoa emerged as an American football 'sports region' and how have these representations affected the migratory patterns of Samoan players?

Sub-questions

- I. How are Samoan football players represented in and perceived by the sports world? How are internal factors (i.e. Samoan life, culture, and society) and external factors (i.e. colonization, imperialism, and exoticism) combining to assist in creating the representation and perception of American Samoa as a sports region?
- II. Is there a spatial pattern as to where Samoan players are commonly recruited to play college football?
- III. Has this migratory pattern changed or been altered since the output of major media publications on the topic?
- IV. How has media output on the topic of the Polynesian Pipeline affected the recruitment and drafting of Samoan players? Is there a statistical correlation between the media output of this phenomena and the number of Samoan players in NCAA or NFL football in subsequent years?

The hypothesis of this project is that the formation of American Samoa as a sports region for football was greatly affected by the media exposure on the topic, and the external perception of this sports region was thus extended through to the Samoan diaspora living elsewhere in the United States. The first media publication on the topic was produced in 1976, but after that, there were virtually no others prior to the series done by ESPN in the early 2000's. The timing of each group of publications coincided with the two largest incremental growth periods for Samoan players in the NFL in the league's entire history. The migratory patterns of the players through

the US college system, like the player numbers themselves, were also expected to increase and diversify. Stories and publications out of major media outlets such as ESPN or Sports Illustrated would widen the range of exposure to the Samoan football player for college coaches and scouts outside of the cities or college conferences where Samoan players originally attended school. These places were almost exclusively in California and Hawai‘i in the first few decades of the NFL, but there began to be more spatial diversification along with the increase in media publications on the topic.

The media publications analyzed in this thesis are a major factor in the migratory patterns of Samoan football players due to their representations of both Samoan culture and the players themselves. The consistent representation of Samoan players as ‘warriors’ is a driving force behind the perceived image of these players as individuals. This aided in forming a sports region around the Samoan football community that carried over into the eyes of the coaches and scouts that largely determine their route of labor migration. These images fulfill the ‘representations of culture’ mentioned by Bale as critical to the formation of sports regions, propelling not only the geographical area of American Samoa but the entire Samoan diaspora into a position as the prime sports region for football in the United States.

The formation of the sports region around the Samoan diaspora and American Samoa allowed for an increase in the number of players of Samoan descent playing both college and professional football. With this increase in player numbers came a subsequent increase in the diversity and range of migratory patterns taken by these players. This study is intended to show that the increases in player numbers and diversification of migratory patterns of Samoan football players were directly correlated with the increase in media publications on the topic and the

subsequent formation of American Samoa and the Samoan culture as a whole as a premier sports region for football in the United States.

Research Methods and Data

This research project builds on previous work done by Jesse Markham, who analyzed the experiences of Samoan football players up through 2006. It is important to recognize that it is nearly impossible to compile an exact number of players that are part of the Samoan diaspora, as this information is not always in mainstream news or accessible. The numbers in this study are calculations based on extensive research that considers a wide variety of football sources and sources based around Samoan athletes specifically. Nearly all of these sources are publicly available on the internet, and they were combined together to form a database containing all players of professional football throughout NFL history that are of Samoan descent.

The players listed in this study earned NFL contracts, but not all had lengthy football careers in the United States. Some players were relegated to their team's practice squad and have thus never seen action in a regular season game. This, however, does not diminish the fact that these players were viewed as good enough to warrant a professional contract by coaches and scouts. That fact alone — the *opportunity* for upward mobility in their chosen career path provided by coaches and scouts — is a major focal point of this study.

The concept of NFL career shelf life is a major factor in both this study as well as the lives of the Samoan players at hand. The biggest realistic enticement for a high school football player- especially in the eyes of family and community members related to the player — is the potential for a free college degree through a football scholarship. The average NFL career is

short — merely 3.3 years according to the statistics site Statista. This renders a complete reliance on a football career illogical. However, the potential for millions of dollars in income from even that short time frame entices any college recruit to maximize his chance of getting noticed by NFL scouts. A maximization of these chances would come from a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the type of offense or defense run by the college they choose to attend, the prestige of the given program, the coaching staffs, and relationships.

Coaching staffs are intertwined extensively from the NCAA to the NFL, and coaching trees (similar to a family tree, but listing coaches who have studied and worked under and with another, more reputable coach) permeate the football landscape and are large factors when teams, college or professional, are looking to hire new coaches. This is especially important in a small and tight knit community like the Samoan population, where the 2010 US Census recorded only 185,000 people of Samoan descent all throughout the entire United States.

This data analysis project combines the above factors with other relevant studies, information, and historical anecdotes to provide an insight into the driving forces of the migratory patterns of Samoan players through the American football system. The project opens with a literature review that examines past research done in the areas of sports geography, sports regions, studies of the perception of athletes and athlete migration that are relevant to Samoan football players, and research done on the players themselves. It will continue by tying in an introduction to the history of football in American Samoa, and elaborating on the relevant historical events that affected the lives of the Samoan people and the opportunities available in American Samoa or for Samoans abroad.

In order to answer the main research question, I compared the home states of the Samoan players with the states in which they chose to attend college. For 'home states', I refer to the states in which the players went to high school. The birth places of players are noted, as well, and is relevant when considering the migratory pathways taken by Samoan people as a whole. The comparative analysis of the migratory patterns was done decade by decade, and thus provides a window into how these patterns changed over time. The timeline of change in migratory patterns was then compared to the media output on the topic in order to see if there was a correlation between media exposure and subsequent increases in player numbers in the following years.

The theoretical concepts of sport as development and the political economy of sports were unpacked and tied into the research question at hand, as well as relevant information regarding each individual player's situation. The media sensation surrounding the Polynesian Pipeline and the Samoan football player was also examined using both document and video analysis with hermeneutic interpretations. The media aspect of this phenomena is extremely important, as popular culture plays a large role in shaping the ideology and cultural hegemony of individual people. Sports - with such a variety of captivating occurrences in the past few years ranging from the NFL anthem protests to LaVar Ball to the Chicago Cubs breaking their incredible World Series curse - are at the forefront of the media for a great majority of people in the United States. The media is capable of creating the externally perceived identities of its subjects, and Samoan football players are no different.

The methodology behind the media portion of this study was a document and video analysis as well as a qualitative comparative analysis in order to investigate the connection

between the growths of Samoan players in the NFL over time with the media output on the subject. These media objects were analyzed for common themes, words, or phrases that produce a specific representation about the Samoan football player. A series of media articles and short films have been produced on the phenomena of the Samoan football players. The first article on the topic was published in Sports Illustrated in 1976, but there was nearly no media attention to the subject again until the twenty first century. This work examines this series of articles: one from 1976 and a plethora from 2000-2003, as well as a 60 Minutes CBS special done in 2010. The media have all come from major sources such as ESPN, Sports Illustrated, or 60 Minutes, and are thus widely viewed and accessible for a large and diverse audience. All sources are able to be accessed via the internet and are accessible for the public.

There was little mainstream media attention to the phenomena before the 2000 NFL season, but interest in the topic has exploded since then with nearly all of the media publications on the topic coming in waves since the turn of the twenty first century. Important points to be analyzed during the document and video content analysis largely focused on the overall theme of the media itself. How does each piece of media portray the Samoan players themselves as they travel through the modern global sports system?

The media was analyzed for consistent phrases across each that are relevant or consistently associated with the topic, including “warrior”, “exotic”, “family”, and Samoan “culture”, or “fa’a Samoa”. These phrases and terms are commonly associated with Samoan (or other Polynesian) cultures and people, in both academic and popular culture works, and the semiotics that they perpetuate builds a very specific image of what a Samoan football player is (or should be). The examination of these phrases in the context of Samoan football players was

analyzed in relation to political economies and western cultural hegemonies. Finding common themes across multiple media platforms assisted in painting the general image of the Samoan football player that is portrayed through the media, and thus carried with the Samoan players on their journey through the football system of the mainland United States.

A key point here is examining the manner in which the Samoan athletes are portrayed – is it the standard ‘Polynesian Warrior’ image? How are their culture and bodies being commodified in order to increase their worth (personal or team)? Has the identification of origins of successful football players ignited media-generated stereotypes, and thus promoted the Samoan people as fulfilling the stereotype of the ‘Polynesian Warrior’ for college coaches and scouts? Is there a certain group of colleges or areas of the nation that are more apt to recruit Samoan players, or NFL teams that are more apt to draft Samoan players, i.e. a migratory trend or path both enabled and enhanced by the Polynesian Pipeline phenomena? These and other questions will be analyzed using the theory of political economy as well as hermeneutics.

The capitalist systems of commodification of labor and people and its relation to producing and influencing migration flows will be translated to the academic sports arena. After all, professional athletes that transverse borders are still migratory workers despite their increased levels of income and fame. This theoretical framework is important in order to recognize the correlation between the political, economic, and social situations in American Samoa (and within the Samoan diaspora), and the football mania in a society that ignites and enables the migratory football patterns taken by Samoan men. This framework was used to answer the major question of this work: How the ‘sports region’ concept and its production in the

mainstream media affect the migratory patterns, commodification, and external perceptions of Samoan athletes in the modern day global sports system?

Chapter Structure

The thesis begins with a brief literature review on sports geography, detailing the history of the sub-discipline since the first geographic publication on sport in the late 19th century through its establishment as a separate sub-discipline in the 1960's. It elaborates on the overall subject of sports geography and the wide range of topics within the sub-discipline itself. Major authors in the field are discussed, including the two most established academics in the subject - John Rooney and John Bale. Also discussed are the overarching themes of space, place, and migration that tie the study of sport into the discipline of geography.

This is continued in a deeper analysis of John Bale's concept of 'sports regions' – a geographical location that is heavily associated with a particular sport and often produces a disproportionate number of athletes in that sport. The analysis of the concept of the sports region is supported by the many studies done throughout history on the topic that are mentioned in Chapter Two. The concept of the sports region is then tied to American Samoa, and also attached to Samoan culture itself due to both the proportionately large Samoan diaspora in the United States as well as the effect that the media has on spreading to the wider public.

Chapter Two continues with analysis of literature done in the past on athlete migration in an effort to unite the concept of sports regions and the journey of Samoan football players, using works by major authors such as Joseph Maguire as supporting assets. This section also discusses the combination of political economy and sport in the modern world, with the migratory patterns

of athletes often being studied in the frame of labor migration. Chapter Two closes with an analysis of past academic literature done on Samoan football players and relevant histories of Samoa, of which Lisa Uperesa is a prominent scholar. These studies – while limited – form the foundation on which this research was based, and set the stage for the player analysis that follows.

Chapter Three analyzes the media publications done on the Polynesian Pipeline and the Samoan football player. It first gives a quick overview of what the media was analyzed for and how they relate to the overall topic before diving into each piece individually. The works are mostly publications from 2000-2003, with only one major publication having been done on the topic in the twentieth century as a whole. These forms of media were analyzed in an attempt to pinpoint how the Samoan football player is represented in our society both on and off the football field. This representation would be noted for its temporal aspects, and how the timing of each publication is relevant to the migratory patterns of the Samoan football player. The chapter closes with an analysis of all of the media publications together to identify which keywords, terms, or phrases are commonly associated with the Samoan football player that help to construct their identity in the eyes of others.

Chapter Four begins a detailed history of Samoan players in the National Football League that is broken down by decade. Due to the low number of players in this demographic in the early days of the league, every decade through the 1960s is combined into one subsection. Next, each decade is broken down individually to notate the Samoan players in each decade and the relevant information to their migratory patterns – including birthplace, where they went to high school, and where they opted to go to college. This section also investigates the comparative

analysis of the migratory patterns of Samoan football players throughout NFL history. The similar migratory patterns of the players in the early days of the NFL up to the end of the 1970s are noted as the original migratory paths taken by these players, setting the baseline for the comparative analysis of players to follow.

Chapter Five analyzes the decades of the 1980s and 1990s individually and compares them to both the original migratory pathways as well as other patterns seen in previous decades. There are a variety of charts, graphs, and maps that are relevant to the study in an attempt to visually represent the growing number of migratory patterns and Samoan players themselves making it to the NFL. It examines key figures in the creation of a sports region around the Samoan football community such as culturally significant players like Junior Seau as well as collegiate coach Dick Tomey. These figures and the consistencies in migratory patterns were important in the formation of the sports region.

Chapter Six continues the study through to the present, analyzing NFL players of Samoan descent that played up through this most recent 2017 season. It ends with a study of consistencies in the migratory patterns, tying together the analysis done in the previous two chapters. It combines this with the media studied in Chapter Three to identify the correlation between media publications on the topic and an increase in both player numbers and diversity of migratory patterns. There is an analysis on correlations of both home states (where players went to high school) and the universities attended by these players, as well as the pathways taken by players from the different home states prevalent in the study.

Chapter Seven, the final chapter of this work, ties together all of the research done in the previous chapters to answer the research questions laid out in the previous subsection. It provides

a condensed analysis of the increase in player numbers and diversity of migratory patterns taken by Samoan players in relation to the timing of media publications on the topic. The correlation, it turns out, is quite strong. The chapter closes with other notable factors found in the research, including the significance of playing close to home or playing football at a junior college before moving on to a division one school. The paper then ends with broader impacts of this study, and how this research on Samoan football players and their migratory patterns can be translated to other areas of academic study.

Chapter Two

Sports Geography, Sports Regions, and Ethnographic Background

Sports first appeared in a geographic publication in 1879, when Elisee Reclus wrote of cricket in the publication *Geography Universelle* (Bale & Dejonghe 2008). Sports were mentioned only sporadically in subsequent decades, with minimal publicity or academic respectability attributed to them. One aspect behind this academic omission could be that, due to the nature of the individual words of 'sport' and 'geography' being used as "floating signifiers" (Bale & Dejonghe 2008), it is difficult to firmly classify the study of sport as geographical. Stuart Hall wrote of floating signifiers, words that are commonly associated with something but have no specific agreed upon meaning or point to any specific object, in terms of race - a major theme in this paper (Hall 1996). The dynamics of studying both sport and geography individually are extremely interdisciplinary, and thus the combination of the two together makes for a new challenge in and of itself. Due to this and other challenges, geographic study of sports was rarely explored for roughly half a century.

Sports Geography

The sub-discipline of sports geography began to emerge at a similar time to many other social sciences - the quantitative revolution of the 1950's. Ernst Jokl and his crew analyzed the national composition of athletes in the 1952 Olympic Games, held in Helsinki (Jokl, et al 1956). They used graphs and statistical models to portray their findings of the regional diversity of participating athletes, while simultaneously critiquing (and thus differentiating themselves from) the environmental determinist perspective previously held by many geographers (Bale &

Dejonghe 2008). This study of location and athlete production was the first to put the study of sports from a geographical perspective on the academic map, and interest would continue to grow in the following decades. Scholars continued to mention sports throughout the 1950's and 60's. This included academics like Terence Burley, who wrote of the relevance of citing economic and social importance of sport, as well as its ability to understand or portray cultural or nationalistic ideologies and beliefs (Burley 1962). However, these studies were mainly situated in disciplines such as economics or sociology, as opposed to human and cultural geography or migration and mobility studies. Sports geography finally grew into a legitimate sub-discipline of its own within the realm of geography during the late 1960's.

The history of sports geography as a respected sub-discipline strongly correlates with the career trajectory of John Rooney - an American geographer who first wrote of sports geography in the 1960's. With his first major paper on a geographical study of sports, published in the *Geographical Review* in 1969, Rooney opened the door for the two main focal points of sports geography as a whole - location and migration (Rooney 1969). Rooney's piece analyzed the college destinations of high school football players from specific parts of the US, mentioning "sociocultural emphasis" as having a role in the decision making process of the players (Rooney 1969). This thesis takes this idea sociocultural emphasis as a major factor in athletic migratory patterns and applies it to the Samoan football player, using the migratory paths taken through history regarding collegiate destinations as evidence.

John Bale, Rooney's European counterpart, has penned many of the major works in the field of sports geography. All sports, he wrote, are 'struggles over space', and therefore subjected to territoriality (Bale 2002). He presents sports as an analogy of 'war without weapons', and cites

examples of how cultural representations, landscapes, and ideologies can be portrayed through sports and fan affiliation (Bale 2002). National identity and culture are greatly affected by globalization, as well as a plethora of political and economic actions and policies (Maguire 2013). The cultural representations of Samoan players have a major role within this realm of geographical research.

Bale made explicit mentions to Rooney's three main approaches to efficiently and adequately study the geography of sports: the topical approach, which *identifies* location, regionalization, spatial aspects, and origin points of athletes; the regional approach, which *analyzes* the spatial variations, organizations, and regionalization of internal and external involvements and association of sports and athletes individually; and the landscape changing approach of sport throughout time, and the impact of changes it has upon the rest of society (Bale 2000). Combining each of these approaches allows the researcher to reveal the nuances of the dynamic relationships between sports, athletes, and societies, and allows for an approach that recognizes each individual moving part of the relationship as well as the interactions between them. This thesis is an attempt to combine these approaches together with the means to analyze how the migratory paths taken by the Samoan football players that make it to the NFL are formed and sustained throughout time.

The subfield of sports geography has undergone a volatile and meandering history despite its relatively short life span. John Rooney and John Bale, the two major figures in sports geography, featured prominently in publications for many decades, and made important advances in two of the sub-discipline's main focal points - location and migration (Rooney 1969, 1974, 1975, 1987; Bale 1982, 1992, 2000, 2002). This work will take both of these concepts and

use them to analyze how football players of Samoan descent move through the migratory pathways of the modern global sports system - specifically in football - and how these pathways formed in the first place.

Sports Regions

Bale echoed Rooney in the recognition of ‘sport regions’, or areas identifying with and producing athletes for a particular sport - often at particular positions, as well (Bale 2002). He states that sports are not only representations of places and their cultural and social structure and ideologies, but examples of disciplinary mechanisms in that given place (Bale 2002). These disciplinary mechanisms could be seen to include the American colonization of American Samoa, and subsequent socio-economic changes that left Samoan boys choosing between cannery work, the United States military, or football for a future occupation.

Sports regions have been case studied sporadically throughout time, with a wide range of areas such as Great Britain or Sub-Saharan Africa as subject regions (Bale 1982, Dejonghe 2001). A wide variety of sports have been included in studies of sports regions, that began with Lehrman’s piece in 1940 titled *Geographic Origins of Professional Baseball Players* (Lehrman 1940). The previously mentioned study by Ernst Jokl and his colleagues in 1956 continued this trend with their study of the geographical distribution of medals won at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics (Jokl, et al. 1956).

Bale examined the imaginative geographies of sport, as well as the effect that globalization has had on location in sports and the production of athletes. Bale also noted the extreme consistency in the discipline of article foci being primarily on the spatial aspects of

sport. The identification of the different origins of athletes has led to much interest in media and mainstream culture, thus spurring the inspiration for this study. A rising number of athletes in professional leagues (especially in North America) are coming from more diverse and unique backgrounds and places of origin. Joseph Maguire wrote of how the concepts of global labor migration and national identity (both common themes in geography) intermingle in respect to the international movement of athletes to pursue their trade (Maguire 2004 & 2011).

Bale references the work of Yi-Fu Tuan, and his idea of ‘topophilia’ - described as a love of place that inspires attraction to that place - in his analyzations of sports fans and the locale and ‘aura’ of the stadiums of specific teams or clubs (Bale, 1996 & 2000). This perception of, and attraction to, the ‘place’ (or, sports region) of American Samoa by football minds in the US, combined with the tendency to racially stack rosters at certain positions as researched by Gregory Ward, fuels the migratory paths that so many Samoan players take. Ward examined the racial construct in the NFL and how it affects selection of players (especially for specific positions on the field) by coaches and managers (Ward 1997). The process of how a professional football coach operates when choosing his players is described therein, and could be translated across to Samoan players.

American Samoa - and Samoan culture itself - have been seemingly combined to become a sports region for football players. The media publications on the topic have been prevalent for decades, and only increased in the twenty first century. This exposure of football players that are not only from American Samoa itself but those in the Samoan diaspora to this external imagery has a significant impact on their migratory paths - of which they have limited control. The

imaginative geography of the Samoan culture has come to be centrally located around football, as noted in Lisa Uperesa's many works on the topic (Uperesa 2010).

These imagined geographies that encompass the sports region of the Samoan culture and American Samoa itself has enabled the racial stacking of Samoan players along the offensive and defensive lines. While there have been many players that have been stars at other positions on the field, over half of the Samoan players that have ever signed an NFL contract have played on either the offensive or defensive line. The concept of the sports region surrounding the Samoan culture and the islands of American Samoa that is spurred by the media has had a significant impact on the increased intensity of the Polynesian Pipeline in recent years.

Athlete Migration and the Political Economy of Sports

In the past decade, there has been a small revival in the study of sports geography in academia. Many of the pieces have been authored by or featured John Bale, including *Global Sports Arena: Athletic Talent Migration in an Interdependent World* (Maguire 2013). This work, published in 2013, brings together and analyzes many case studies regarding migration of athletes for sporting purposes. A rising number of athletes in professional leagues (especially in North America) are coming from more diverse and unique backgrounds and places of origin, prompting much interest from fans, the media, and professional scouts alike.

In Christopher Gaffney's article *Geography of Sport*, published in 2014, he recognizes the theoretical analyses applied by Bale and Maguire in their landmark work *Global Sports Arena: Athletic Talent Migration in an Interdependent World*. Bale and Maguire attributed such applications as world systems theory, dependency theory, and hegemonic and global systems

analysis to view migration of athletes in this publication (Gaffney 2014). Athlete migration encompasses all of location, place, movement, regionalization, societal integration, cultural interaction, and human-environment interaction into one realm, and is thus a prime subject for analysis in the subfield of sports geography.

In the introduction to their collaboration *The Global Sports Arena*, Bale and Joseph Maguire address the migration of athletes in the form of standard labor migration. They viewed the labor migration of athletes by looking at the dynamics of commodification of these athletes that occur within the sporting world, as well as the greater sphere of the global capital economy. A variety of contributing authors address broad theoretical issues attached to migration of athletes, such as processes of development, reasons why athletes choose to go to the place that they do, and integration of athletes into a host society (Maguire 2013). They also recognize in the introduction the possibility of athletic migration to serve as foreshadowing of broader migration patterns, as superior athletes will not only be allowed to migrate before the average citizen, but oftentimes can be encouraged to — as was the case of the Soviet hockey player Alexander Mogilny defecting prior to the fall of the Soviet Union (LeBlanc & McElhanney 2014).

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Natalie Koch wrote a piece on sport's role in nation-building by studying the dynamics of sport in post-Soviet Kazakhstan (Koch 2013). While the two territorial jurisdictions in Samoan Islands are not part of 'authoritarian' regimes, per se, the concepts of sport's centrality and importance in nation-building hold strong across political structures and directly apply to the creating of a sports region. The entire Samoan football community, both within the Samoan Islands as well as elsewhere around the world as members of the diaspora population, have seen football become a central figure in how they are perceived by the rest of the world. This paper analyzes how that concept has affected the migratory patterns of players through the American football system.

In regards to the relationship of sport and the theory of political economy, the many works written on the subject center around sports' assumption of a larger role in the production or regeneration of national, regional, or local identities (Nauright 2004). In order to become a commodity, a sport has to be reproducible in addition to simply produced (Forster & Pope 2001). It is important to note that the sheer size of the sporting industry as a whole, and the NFL specifically, have major effects on these webs of engagement. Past studies of media portrayals of athletes have been done examining the portrayal of black athletes (McKay 1995), and the political economy of the modern global sports system has direct ties to these athlete portrayals (Shaw 2005). This study of Samoan football players fits well into this area of literature as it encompasses racial stacking as well as the role of football in the production of the Samoan identity.

Political economy and the relations of production, trade, and consumption within the realm of international politics directly applies to the modern global sports system. With a

skyrocketing economic value (the Dallas Cowboys - one of thirty two NFL teams - were recently valued at \$4.8 billion by Forbes), the NFL in particular can hold significant weight even when facing the legal system (Breech 2017). Recent legal battles involving the NFL such as Deflategate are prime examples the bargaining power that professional sports have.

Athlete production is unlike most other types of production, as it is involving the lives of individual people. The production of football players, however, can occur anywhere in the world due to the nature of football as a largely athletic sport (as opposed to a skill sport, like ice hockey or golf). The exposure of groups of people to football would then, however, provide them greater opportunities to succeed in the sport. The production of football players within the Samoan culture - and in American Samoa itself - was expedited due to the colonization of the islands by the United States. Due to this, Samoans make up the significant majority of Polynesian players in the NFL. The political economy of sports has greatly affected the specific pathways within the Polynesian Pipeline, and this thesis is an examination of where and how they formed.

While long being ridiculed for its 'cartographic fetishization', the geographic study of sport has begun to find its theoretical framework from which to advance to the study of the 'whys' of migration, not just the 'whos' or 'whats' (Bale 1992). However, recent works and publications have applied a wide variety of theories and frameworks applied to them from a wide variety of fields, and sports geography has begun a small revival in the early twenty first century. Among them, political economy has been selected as the ideal framework for an analysis of the migratory patterns of Samoan football players through the modern global sports system.

American Samoa and the Samoan Culture: History and Football

There have been a few major authors that have worked on the subject of the Samoan football player. Most notably is Lisa Uperesa, whose father Tu'ufuli was one of the first Samoan players to ever play in the NFL as well as the first NFL player to be born in American Samoa itself. Lisa Uperesa wrote of how American football has become a virtual stage for the performance of Polynesian manhood and masculinity, and even gets to stand for traditional culture since cession of islands to US. She describes football as a path of transnational movement, social mobility, and status or prestige both among the Samoan community and back in American Samoa itself. Uperesa combines these concepts surrounding football as a means for players to achieve “gridiron capital”, and thus move higher up the proverbial ladder in all aspects of life, and assesses the significance of football to everyday life in American Samoa (Uperesa 2010).

Uperesa has published a variety of works on the topic, and notes the significant of the military presence in American Samoa on the economic opportunities afforded to the local populace. Uperesa's writings relate to the selection of political economy as the theoretical framework for this piece, as she writes “football migration is an elite form of migratory movement that nevertheless draws on the reserve labor of young Samoan men in an underdeveloped economy within a larger context of global inequality” (Uperesa 2014). With no major college or professional team in the islands, it is necessary for a player from American Samoa to migrate elsewhere to continue their potential football career. Uperesa also noted the consistent presence of Samoans on the offensive and defensive lines, shining further light on the racial stacking within the Polynesian Pipeline.

Racial stacking of Samoan football players was also researched by Robert Murray, who did a statistical analysis of Samoan players throughout history and offered suggestions and explanations behind why the phenomena occurred the way it has. Murray also analyzed very specific sports regions in his analysis of where specific positions on the field have come from in recent drafts. He found a disproportionately large numbers of players from American Samoa in the drafts, and conducted a case study of the phenomena. He analyzed the many aspects of Samoan culture, heritage, and lifestyle that could potentially have contributed to the high number of draftees from the sports region of American Samoa - which he also proved through data analysis (Murray 2014). However, what was not analyzed was the medium through which the information regarding Samoa and Samoan people is transmitted to football coaches and scouts in the continental United States - the media.

The media and popular culture can help to create identities for individuals or groups of people. Jesse Markham's paper centered on the mobility aspect of Samoan players, and how their identity and perception of them has been changed throughout time (Markham 2008). He analyzed the effect that this phenomena surrounding their culture and football had on the Samoan players and how it played a role in their collegiate destinations and migration patterns. Markham focused mainly on the identities of the players, and how they were affected and simultaneously had an effect on the phenomena of the Polynesian Pipeline that was, at the time of his writing, currently in its media boom (Markham 2008). Markham also teamed up with Dr. Ty Tengan to write of the stereotype of Polynesian masculinity and its affect upon recruitment and mobility of Samoan players in an article for the International Journal for the History of Sport (Tengan & Markham, 2009).

Other examinations have been done by authors such as Joel Franks, who examined the role of Polynesian players in the NFL in the late 2000's (Franks 2009). Adam Beissel wrote an in depth study on the overall economy behind football in American Samoa, and how "biopolitical, geopolitical, and cultural political structures" transform the Samoan body in different ways when placed in the overall global sports system (Beissel 2015). These past studies on the Samoan football player have largely focused on identity and the rising significance of football within the Samoan culture and community. This paper added a new dynamic to these concepts in analyzing media outputs on the topic in a way to more fully observe the creation of the sports region around the Samoan football community.

Chapter Three

The Media and the Polynesian Pipeline

The media and popular culture are a phenomena of contemporary society with an incredibly wide range of contents, contexts, symbols, meanings, and hegemonies. Media has transformed itself into an economic powerhouse, with deeper pockets than many sovereign states and the ability to get its intended information through to the masses via the use of technological mediums of communication. This growth and variation in the player demographics of the league has been of much interest to the media, league officials, and the public alike. The Polynesian football player has been a subject of both media sensation and publications as well as severely increased interest from the coaches and recruiters within the American football system. This increased interest in which the number of Samoan players in the NFL coincided with the flow of media output of the phenomena leads to the overarching question: how are these Samoan players represented and portrayed in the media and in popular culture, and how does the media output of this phenomena relate to and affect the migratory patterns and opportunities taken by Samoan football players?

Document Analysis: Shake 'Em Out of the Coconut Trees - Richard Johnston, August 16, 1976

On August 8, 1976, *Sports Illustrated* published an article titled “Shake ‘Em Out of the Coconut Trees”, focusing on the game of football in American Samoa and the Samoan players themselves. The title of the article in and of itself is quite racially charged and ignorant, and the discourse and writing style of the article further portrays this ‘othering’ of the Samoan football player - seemingly in an attempt to mystify their existence as hard working ‘warriors’ that have

been virtually untouched by western society. There is a clear hegemonic discourse that permeates the work.

The article describes the history of football on the island of Tutu'ila, the main island of American Samoa, and notes the popular Polynesian football players of the time period such as Mosi Tatupu and Manu Tuiasosopo. The author describes how five high schools on Tutu'ila organized into an athletic group in 1968, and by 1970 coaches and former players were coming to the island from external places (such as Hawai'i) to aid in developing the game (Johnston 1976). This lack of development and training for football players in American Samoa helps to explain the lack of players before the 1970's; yet, there was clearly enough visibility of Polynesian football players for an article to be written on the subject during that time. The article, however, reveals an interesting perspective on this specific group of players.

The article frequently mentions the terms 'warrior', 'culture', 'family', and 'fa'a Samoa', or the Samoan way (of life). These terms are used not only to describe attributes of the football players, but other members of Samoan society themselves. The article writes of Samoans as seeming to have "stepped into the 20th century from some secret museum of ocean antiquities", and noting their incredible work ethic involving climbing trees "100 feet tall" (Johnston 1976). The author notes that Samoan society is "like Scots and marines, the families delight in fighting each other", further promoting their 'genetically predisposed' abilities in football (Johnston 1976). The language used allows for significant 'othering' of the Samoan football player, and thus Samoans as a whole. The comparison to fabled Scots and use of terms like 'antiquities' and 'stepped into the 20th century' seems to give some noble savage qualities to the Samoan, further othering and exoticizing the Samoan people as a society.

The author mentions actor Al Harrington, a Samoan actor on Hawai‘i Five-0 who also played college football at Stanford University, who elected to “exploit his warrior body, chiefly mien and dramatic skills as an actor in Hawai‘i Five-0 (he plays Ben Kokua) and as the star of a Waikiki luau show.” (Johnston 1976). The key point in this passage is the “electing to exploit his warrior body, chiefly mien and dramatic skills”. The physical description of Harrington himself is consistent with the semiotic representation of Polynesian athletes with his ‘warrior body’ and ‘chiefly mien’, but the key term here is the use of ‘exploit’. The Samoan football player is one that is externally noticeable for their physical size and strength and cultural expressions such as long hair or tribal tattoos. The media surrounding Samoan football players, and the semiotic representations and identities they portray to the general public, toe a fine line between cultural representation and cultural exploitation of these athletes.

This article, the original piece on the Samoan football player, makes frequent reference to Samoan culture and fa’a Samoa, going so far as saying, “The young Samoans preparing for the coming season are acutely aware that they are more than football players—they are missionaries for fa’a Samoa, the Samoan way of life. As their coaches already know, if you ask a Samoan to run five miles, he’ll run 10; if you ask him to take out an opponent, he is apt to take him clear out of the stadium” (Johnston 1976). This use of culture as a catalyst to success in football – and potential upward mobility in other aspects of life – demonstrates the significance of the perceived ‘sports region’ surrounding Samoan players in their journey through the American football system. Culture, as a non-definable and abstract entity all on its own, can be carried through and tethered to anybody related to that specific culture. It is here in which the semiotic representations of Samoans and Samoan culture come to life, as mere recognition of this cultural

presence attached to a player has the potential to springboard the player to opportunities that he may not have had otherwise.

Document Analysis: 2001-2002 ESPN Article Series

ESPN, a major sports media outlet in the United States, came out with a series of articles on Polynesian football players in 2001 and 2002. The group of six articles, with some published online and some published in *ESPN The Magazine*, had different focal points centered around the same topic. The articles were written by three authors - Bruce Feldman, Greg Garber, or Ted Miller - and were published in clusters in November of 2001 and May of 2002.

The first two articles were written by Bruce Feldman for *ESPN The Magazine* in November of 2001. In the first article, “Buy a Vowel”, Feldman merely introduced the Samoan players in the NCAA during the 2001 season - the “big, athletic men with huge vowel-packed names” (Feldman 2001 *BAV*). The term ‘warrior’ is mentioned once, and Feldman provides a list of that year’s recruits of Samoan descent as well as presenting an ‘All Samoan’ team of current (at the time) college players. An interesting note from the article is that among the top 30 lineman prospects on the west coast during the 2001 season, 6 of them were of Samoan descent (Feldman 2001 *BAV*). This article brought to light the extreme jump in Samoan players in high-level football at the turn of the millennium.

In “Rock Star”, Feldman focuses on Tonia Fonoti, who is seen as a prototype of the Samoan football player - a punishing offensive lineman. Fonoti is a star lineman at the University of Nebraska — which until 1999 had never had a Samoan player on its roster (Fonoti, at the time, was one of five Samoan players) (Feldman 2001 *RS*). Feldman quotes Fonoti in

saying, “The stereotype is that Samoans are aggressive and ill-tempered people. I think that stuff is true. Most of the guys in our culture are aggressive automatically. That’s just the way we are” (Feldman 2001 *RS*). He pairs this quote with writing that further exoticize Samoan players and culture, including referring to taro as the “Samoan steroid”, describing Fonoti’s father being Chief of the village that he is from, and the casual mention of cannibalistic history in Samoa that, unless intended for further exoticization and perpetuation of the ‘noble savage’ stereotype of the Samoan people, is otherwise irrelevant. This article does, however, focus immensely on family in the Samoan culture. While the term ‘warrior’ was only used once, ‘family’ was mentioned 6 times, and ‘culture’ was mentioned 3.

The insight into the life of Toniu Fonoti talks much of the culture of Samoa and the importance of family within that culture, hence the aforementioned reference of Fonoti’s father being Chief of their village (Feldman 2001 *RS*). Feldman gets confirmation on the importance of family in their lifestyle from Fonoti himself in the article. For instance, Fonoti explains that “Samoans take their names very seriously. It represents their families and the people that came before you. So if I don’t put forth the extra effort, I’m putting my name down. But if I’m putting in that extra effort on the field, I’m raising my name up” (Feldman 2001 *RS*). Fonoti’s expression of his own view on this topic affirms the significance of family in the Samoan lifestyle and culture.

Feldman also contributed one article to the series in 2002, titled “Where Football Really is a Religion”. This article mentions the terms ‘Polynesian Pipeline’ and ‘culture’ four times each, as well as two mentions of ‘family’ and one of ‘warrior’, continuing the trend of key terms within media associated with the Polynesian football player. This article focuses on Tongan and

Samoan recruits to Brigham Young University (BYU), the major institution for Mormon student-athletes. It focuses on the religious aspect of recruiting Polynesian football players, and how BYU specifically has played a major role in this aspect. At the time of the writing of this article, 13,000 of American Samoa's 67,000 people were members of the LDS church, as were roughly 45,000 of the 104,000 members of the Tongan population (Feldman 2002). BYU, Feldman writes, is a melting pot for all groups of Polynesians, who find themselves comfortable with one another in such a different setting from their homelands.

The familial and kinship connections among Polynesian players has a major effect on where they choose to go to school, and BYU was one of the first universities to recognize this trend. Feldman references former BYU assistant coach Chris Apostol, who is credited with using the tool of religion to open the Polynesian Pipeline for BYU football and having a massive effect on the future recruiting approaches with regard to Polynesian players (Feldman 2002). This article mentions the new (as of the article's writing) coach Gary Crowton, who "already has begun recruiting 10 Polynesian players for next year's recruiting class" (Feldman 2002). The significance of this recruiting tactic is not restricted to the religious university of BYU. The familial and kinship connections that weigh heavily in Polynesian society and culture have long been recognized by certain universities and football programs. It was not until recently, however, that this trend began to be realized by the wide majority of football programs in the United States.

The other three articles that came out in 2002 were shorter pieces focusing primarily on Samoan culture and its relation to football. The first article, "American Football, Samoan Style", was written by Ted Miller and focuses on the game of football in American Samoa itself

and how it fits into traditional Samoan culture (Miller 2002). Miller sets the scene of Samoa by describing the lush green mountains, open air homes, and friendly people sporting lava lavas who live on this remote archipelago. He then touches on the history of warrior history and cannibalism in Samoa – pushing the image of the Polynesian male warrior into the forefront – and analyzes how these cultural images tie into football (Miller 2002). Miller writes, “Now they take their aggressions out on the football field, and they do so with uncanny power and skill due to a potent brew of genetics and culture. Their bodies are naturally big-boned; traditional dances make them nimble; and a disciplined upbringing emphasizes the group over the individual, wiring them for team sports” (Miller 2002). This cultural appropriation into the world of sports creates a very specific image of the Samoan football player, and one that seemingly brings positive results. Miller illustrates this point in stating that, at the time of the article’s writing, there were 500,000 Samoans in the world, and half of them were not exposed to football at all. Yet, over 200 played NCAA football during the previous season (Miller 2002).

Greg Garber wrote the final two articles in the ESPN Article Series, the first titled “The Dominican Republic of the NFL”. This article followed up on Miller’s piece in addressing the sheer number and increase of Samoan players in the NFL, and touched on some of their familial and kinship ties mentioned by Miller in his piece. Garber notes that in 2002, there were 50 Polynesians in the NFL – 28 of them Samoan (Garber 2002 *DR-NFL*). There were over 200 Samoan players in NCAA football, and Garber notes that 18 of the 28 Samoan players were in either their first or second NFL season at the time of the article’s writing (Garber 2002 *DR-NFL*). This significant increase is what prompted Garber to write the article, and he uses Samoan culture – a term he mentions twice – as a justification for the increase. He quotes NFL Hall of

Famer Junior Seau in saying “I honestly think it is tied to the work ethic within the home. Those intangibles of not taking anything for granted. For me, what my mom and dad instilled within me has helped me overcome obstacles and focus on the sport itself” (Garber 2002 *DR-NFL*). This cultural significance could be further indicated by the presence of frequent NFL family relations among Samoan players, such as that of former quarterback Marques Tuiasosopo, who had 11 relatives that played football in either the NCAA or the NFL (Garber 2002 *DR-NFL*). Finally, Garber writes in this article about the college destinations of the Samoan players. The Pac-10, with schools on the west coast, is the primary destination for Samoan players both from the islands of Samoa themselves or part of the diaspora on the US mainland. BYU, with its religious ties and affiliation and heavy LDS presence around Polynesia, is the other major destination. Interestingly, Garber notes that this consistency carries over to NFL teams, as well. At the time of the article’s writing, four teams in the NFL had three Samoan players on their roster. Three of those teams were on the west coast (Garber 2002 *DR-NFL*).

The final piece Garber wrote was very short and centered on the opinions and views of the Samoan players in the eyes of coaches and scouts, titled “They Might Be Giants”. The term ‘culture’ is mentioned twice, and Garber actually quotes a Yale professor of genetics and psychiatry in analyzing genetic predispositions Samoan players could have that may be advantageous on the football field. The most interesting point made in this article, however, involves racial stacking. Garber points out that of the 28 Samoan players in the NFL during the time period, only 9 were not playing as linemen (Garber 2002 *TMBG*). Bill Parcells, longtime NFL head coach, was quoted as saying that Samoan players were “built perfectly for work in the trenches” (Garber 2002 *TMBG*). Bill Polian, coach for the Indianapolis Colts, also agreed to their

superiority. Even former University of Hawai‘i coach June Jones stated that he “needs to visit the mainland for athletes who play off the line of scrimmage, but generally can stock both sides of the line with players from the surrounding islands” (Garber 2002 *TMBG*). This perception of the Samoan football player shows that they are not only viewed in a certain light for their potential in football, they are viewed in a certain light for their potential at a certain *position* in football.

An interesting note in this article series is that in “The Dominican Republic of the NFL”, Garber writes “the island of American Samoa” (Garber 2002 *DR-NFL*). This reveals the not only the geographical ignorance but lack of background research performed in many media productions in society, and it is possible that this mindset is carried over to college recruiters looking for Samoan football players. Garber raises an interesting point in his article “They Might Be Giants”: is there a cultural bias against Samoans as there once was against African-Americans? The exoticization and othering of Polynesians in American society, coupled with the colonial history the United States has had over many Polynesian places such as American Samoa and Hawai‘i, allows for hegemonic discourses to create the very specific external image that is central to the recruiting of Samoan football players: the Polynesian male warrior.

Document Analysis: Football in Paradise - by Bill Syken, November 3, 2003

The last major article on this topic was published in *Sports Illustrated* in November of 2003. “Football in Paradise” focused mainly on the individual lives of the Samoan players, and that is reflected in the common terms within the piece. While there were two mentions each of ‘culture’ and ‘fa’a Samoa’, there were no mentions of ‘warrior’ or ‘exotic’ at all. Instead, ‘family’ was mentioned 11 times throughout the article, periodically stressing the details of

individual lives of players as anecdotes. Syken revealed that in the two years prior to the 2003 article, 97 of the 800 boys that graduated from American Samoan high schools during that period went on to play football at two or four year colleges on the mainland United States (Syken 2003). That is roughly one in eight males that graduate high school in American Samoa that move on to high level football - roughly 12.5% of players. The NCAA's most recent research for the United States as a whole shows that only 6.8% of high school football players will make it to the collegiate level (NCAA 2017).

The familial and cultural aspect seen in previous articles again rings true in this piece. Syken writes, "When American coaches discuss the distinguishing characteristics of Samoan players, they talk about the passion the kids bring to the game and their cultural identity, two traits that merge seamlessly in the huddle" (Syken 2003). The frequency of culture, passion, and family life that occur in external perceptions of the Samoan football player have created a very specific image of the Samoan football player that coaches and recruiters are searching for. The Polynesian Pipeline, Syken writes, was really opened up by former University of Hawai'i coach Dick Tomey (Syken 2003). During his tenures as coach at the universities of Hawai'i and Arizona, Tomey had over 120 Samoan players on his teams. Tomey was quoted as saying, "There are no athletes that are, in my estimation, more competitive, more athletic or more family-oriented, or who fit into a team concept as well as Samoan athletes. The more we could get on our team, the better I felt" (Syken 2003). This coaching sentiment has been echoed in both previous and future pieces, but the coaching ties to recruiting go deeper than the external view of the Samoan player.

Syken quotes former University of Colorado player Sulu Petaia, who is a perfect example of how familial ties within the Samoan community, coupled with this frequent external perception of the Samoan football player, can offer up opportunities for players. Petaia was coached by Okland Salave'a, whose brother Joe was a well-known NFL lineman. Okland had played college football at Colorado, and returned to American Samoa after his graduation to coach high school football. Salave'a called his former coach and recommended both Petaia and teammate Donnell Leomiti for scholarships. Both were offered scholarships based on the word of Salave'a alone - no Colorado staffer had ever seen them play, and neither Leomiti nor Petaia had ever visited the Buffaloes' campus. This reveals the true power that the Venn diagram of the football community with that of the Samoan cultural and familial community has within the recruiting system of American football.

Document Analysis: American Samoa: Football Island - 60 Minutes CBS Special with Scott Pelley, January 17, 2010

Years after the cluster of articles came out on the Samoan football player, *60 Minutes* did a special episode on the phenomenon that focused on the game itself on the island of Tutu'ila. Pelley revealed that a Samoan boy is estimated to be 56 times more likely to make it to the NFL than any other child in the United States (Pelley 2010). The film crew notes the significance of having over 30 players in the NFL and 200 in NCAA's Division I during the year of filming (2010) and the issues that are presented to Samoan boys within football itself. For Samoan boys in diaspora communities on the US mainland, they may find themselves too big for their age group and forced to play against older kids. For boys in American Samoa itself, the problem

becomes immeasurably more challenging. Most Samoan boys don't play organized football until high school, and the schools in American Samoa do not have proper equipment, facilities, practice fields, or weight rooms (Pelley 2010). This is seen often in the progression that players make after leaving Tutu'ila. A perfect example is former Cincinnati Bengals defensive tackle Jonathan Fanene. He played defensive tackle at Utah tipping the scale at nearly 300 pounds. He left American Samoa as a high school senior who played quarterback - and weighed only 210 pounds (Pelley 2010).

The *60 Minutes* special highlighted the importance of football in American Samoa itself. The video opens up with the a high school team from American Samoa performing a haka dance - immediately perpetuating the exoticism and otherness of the Samoan culture. It mentions how American Samoa is a paradise, yet two-thirds of the population are below the poverty line (Pelley 2010). It also mentions how there are only three main options for boys growing up on Tutu'ila: the military, the tuna canneries, and football. The ticket that football can provide is not just a potential shot at the NFL, but an opportunity for something also beneficial - a free college education.

The Samoan Warrior: Analysis and Common Themes

The Samoan football player has become commodified and packed within a particular image that has been portrayed and distributed throughout modern media - the Polynesian male warrior. This is clearly seen in the frequency of terms that appear within the variety of media analyzed in this study. Below is a list of how often each term or phrase appeared:

- *Warrior*: 6 of 9 sources
- *Exotic*: 1 of 9 sources
- *Family*: 5 of 9 sources
- *Culture*: 8 of 9 sources
- *Fa'a Samoa*: 3 of 9 sources

The high frequency of ‘warrior’, ‘family’, and ‘culture’ signify a common theme across the entire range of media on the topic, and one that has not only been prevalent since the initial publications but carried through into modern times. Warriorhood has been seen as a major aspect of Polynesian culture, and that mass portrayal was immediately placed upon Samoan football players. While it is easy to see the correlation between warriors and football players, football has become a stage for the cultural identity of American Samoa and Samoan people.

This cultural identity is that of the Polynesian Warrior, which has been explored in academic writing by a few different scholars. Jesse Markham wrote of the stereotype of the ‘noble savage’ in regards to the Samoan football player, and how football has helped to fuel this semiotic creation (Markham 2008). Markham and Ty Tengan teamed up to analyze how performances of Polynesian warriorhood and masculinity in football reflect the greater history of Pacific Islands’ engagement with the United States and capitalism in the Pacific (Tengan & Markham 2009). This representation of Samoan people has led to football becoming such a centralized part of the Samoan identity that Lisa Uperesa claims it is directly tied to the capital received by the players and their families - in a financial, social, and cultural sense (Uperesa 2014).

This image and semiotic representation of the Polynesian warrior has been constant in nearly all outputs of media and literature on the topic of Samoan football players. Lisa Uperesa argued that football has provided a sort of 'gridiron capital' for Samoan boys, where they can increase their socioeconomic and cultural standing as well as their financial standing the more capital they accumulate on the football gridiron (Uperesa 2010). It has created and solidified a specific image of who and what a Samoan football player is supposed to be and look like, and this image has been distributed not only to the public but to those very people in charge of the players themselves - coaches and recruits. The gratitude and impact of images upon scouts and coaches within the football system can be seen quite easily when examining the number of Samoan players throughout history.

Chapter Four

Samoan Players in the Early NFL: Home States and Migratory Patterns

While popular players such as Marcus Mariota, Junior Seau, and Troy Polamalu have propelled the Samoan football player into the limelight and national sports conversation in recent years, the first instances of Samoan players in the NFL came many decades before them. The NFL was founded in 1920, but its popularity was overshadowed by collegiate football during its early years. This would start to change during the 1950's, with the NFL beginning to take a stronghold as a professional league in the growing US economy after World War II. It was also during this post-war period that the NFL began to see its first players of Samoan descent - the first waves of the Polynesian Pipeline.

Samoan NFL Players: The Early Days

Al Lolotai, born and raised in Hawai'i and graduate of 'Iolani High School, was the first player of Samoan descent to suit up in an NFL game when he made his debut for Washington in 1945. This was, of course, during the era of segregation - Jackie Robinson would not break the color barrier in Major League Baseball until two years later in 1947. Samoans and other Polynesians, while not necessarily experiencing the same level of racial intolerance as African-Americans or other groups at the time, were not often provided with ample opportunities for upward socioeconomic mobility - including in professional sports. Despite this, players of Samoan descent began to join NFL teams.

Lolotai made his way from Honolulu to Weber Junior College (now Weber State University) in Utah and onto the NFL for his lone season in 1945. Lolotai would help lead

Washington to the NFL Championship Game, where they fell just short to the Cleveland Rams (now the Los Angeles Rams). Lolotai, like some fellow Polynesian football players in the future, would leave football shortly after his career began to embark on a new athletic adventure - professional wrestling. His legacy, however, is cemented in NFL lore as the player who paved the way for the Polynesian Pipeline and the heavy number of Polynesians that would follow in his footsteps to professional football.

Lolotai was the only player of Samoan descent to play in the NFL during the 1940's, and the 1950's saw only one other Samoan player make it all the way up through the American football system. Charley Ane, also born and raised in Hawai'i and a graduate of Punahou School, became the second Samoan player to make an NFL roster when he left the University of Southern California and signed with the Detroit Lions in 1951. Ane would go on to have a solid six year career, winning the NFL Championship twice and making the Pro Bowl (All-Star Game) twice in the latter stages of his career. Ane was recognized as a major part of the dominant Detroit Lions teams of the 1950's, and was inducted into the Polynesian Football Hall of Fame - along with Al Lolotai - in 2016.

The 1960's saw Charley Ane retire at the turn of the decade, and only one other Samoan player made their debut in the ensuing ten seasons in the NFL. Like those before him, he graduated high school in Hawai'i. Leo Reed, another offensive lineman and a homegrown graduate of Kahuku High School on O'ahu's North Shore, attended and played football at Colorado State University. He went on to play one professional season following his graduation in the fall of 1961, appearing in games for both the Denver Broncos and Houston Oilers. Reed,

the NFL's third ever player of Samoan descent, spent just one season in professional football and did not play an NFL game after 1961.

However, there was almost a Samoan superstar in the NFL toward the latter half of the decade. Halfback Bob Apisa was born in American Samoa, but raised in Hawai'i and was a graduate of Farrington High School in Honolulu. Apisa interestingly attended Michigan State University - not a place traditionally associated with Samoan people, or Polynesian people at all. Despite this, Apisa was twice named an All-American while running for the Spartans and was selected by the Green Bay Packers in the 1968 NFL Draft. Apisa unfortunately had knee issues, and did not get to continue his football career in the NFL. Yet, his stardom at Michigan State University was the beginning of a reciprocal connection between the Samoan community in the United States (specifically in Honolulu) and the Michigan State Spartans football program. His legacy at Michigan State would prove to be incredibly significant as the years went by.

The Early Days: Consistencies

By the end of the 1960's, the NFL as a league was forty years old, and had seen just three players of Samoan descent in that time period. All three of them had striking similarities that foreshadowed what was to come: all three players were born and raised in Hawai'i, and all three players played on the offensive line. The migratory paths of the original three Samoan NFL players took them each from high schools on O'ahu to lesser known football colleges in the western portion of the United States.

The three early Samoan NFL players from Al Lolotai in 1945 to Leo Reed in 1961 all played high school football in Hawai'i, and all attended colleges in the western United States.

Leo Reed attended Colorado State University - not exactly a football powerhouse - and Lolotai attended what is now Weber State University; however, at the time of his attendance, it was Weber Junior College. Charley Ane attended a junior college prior to moving on to top level collegiate football at USC. Despite playing football at schools not traditionally seen as football hotbeds for NFL talent, all three of these players went on to achieve professional careers in football.

Charley Ane's career and legacy hold two important aspects that are significant to understanding the phenomena of the Samoan football player throughout history. First is the familial connection within Samoan football that will be discussed deeper later in this paper and was well researched by Markham (Markham 2008). Familial connections and relationships are not only significant in Samoan culture itself but are also prevalent on the football field. Ane and his son Charles 'Kale' Ane III, who played seven NFL seasons during the 1970's and 1980's, represent just one of many sets of Samoan football players who are related in some way. These connections and potential for name recognition allow for wider visibility in the eyes of recruiters, coaches, and scouts, providing more opportunity for upward socioeconomic mobility in the form of a college scholarship or NFL contract.

The second major factor of Charley Ane's career was his migratory path through the American football system. Ane left Punahou (High) School in 1947, and went originally to Compton Junior College in California in 1949. After one year proving himself in the junior college ranks, Ane transferred to the University of Southern California in 1950, which propelled him to the NFL draft three years later. Attending a junior college on the US mainland prior to playing top level collegiate football proved to be incredibly beneficial for Ane, and the future

would show that others took notice. The junior college path would prove to be one taken by many Samoan players throughout history, primarily from the archipelago of American Samoa itself.

In American Samoa, the 1960's represents a groundbreaking decade for football development in the archipelago. As discussed earlier in this paper, Tutu'ila's high schools organized themselves into an athletic association and began playing football in 1968 (Johnston 1976). Milton DeMello, an administrator in Hawai'i's educational system, went in 1970 to work in the school system of American Samoa. He brought with him the original Samoan NFL player, Al Lolotai, to work on developing organized sports - specifically football (Johnston 1976). The game of football began to take hold in American Samoa with the help of former Samoan football players, and this development was a significant advancement for the aspiring high school athletes on Tutu'ila. With the only three previous Samoan players in the NFL up to that point all being born and raised in Hawai'i - a popular migratory destination for Samoans moving to the United States - the end of the 1960's represented the beginning of opportunity through football for boys growing up on the island of Tutu'ila.

Although he did not make it to the NFL due to injury concerns, the career of Bob Apisa was arguably just as significant as the three early Samoan players who made it to the NFL. Also graduating high school on the island of O'ahu like the three players mentioned in this chapter, Apisa's stardom for Michigan State in the 1960's allowed for spatial diversity in the awareness of the football talent that lie in the Pacific Islands. In coming years, many more Samoan players would be playing in the collegiate ranks (Markham 2008).

Samoan NFL Players: The 1970's

At the end of the 1960's, there had been only three Samoan players in the NFL's forty-year history - and the last of those played just a handful of games in 1961. When Tu'ufuli Uperesa made his debut for the Philadelphia Eagles in 1971, he simultaneously became both the fourth Samoan player in NFL history as well as the first player in pro football history to be born in American Samoa itself. Uperesa moved to Hawai'i from American Samoa during his childhood, and graduated from Aiea High School in central O'ahu. Uperesa's migratory path to professional football is similar to Charley Ane's path through the junior college ranks; Uperesa graduated from a Hawai'i high school and starred at Wenatchee Valley Junior College in Washington before eventually transferring to the University of Montana prior to his career in professional football.

Tu'ufuli Uperesa was beloved at the University of Montana for his tenacity and work ethic on and off the field, and was revered the same with his teammates in the locker room as he was named team captain in 1969. Uperesa was also a significant cultural figure during his time on the gridiron. University news articles came out noting the significance of his transfer to Montana, some that stated he was a "native Hawaiian" - a common issue that Samoan (and other Polynesian) players would face upon their arrival in the mainland US (Schwanke 1968). This assumption, despite its ignorance and lack of background research, could have been rooted in the fact that Uperesa went to high school in Hawai'i. The fascination with Uperesa's cultural background could have sprung from the limited history of Polynesians in Missoula, Montana, potentially prompting interest among the local populace. However, it is notable in and of itself that the cultural significance of Uperesa's mere presence at the University of Montana was

enough to merit news articles and fanfare upon his transfer from Wenatchee Valley Junior College. Continuing the trend of attending junior college and subsequently transferring to a larger university mirrors many stories of future players of Samoan descent - especially others from American Samoa itself.

Uperesa's NFL debut in 1971 was followed by the first significant jump in the number of professional Samoan football players toward the end of the decade. The seasons of 1974 and 1975 saw Jim Nicholson and Charles "Kale" Ane III debut, respectively. Their appearances saw the first six players of Samoan descent in NFL history all play high school football on O'ahu. Ane III, the son of former NFL player Charley Ane and a graduate of the Punahou School (HI), was a teammate of Nicholson's at both Michigan State University and with the Kansas City Chiefs, with migratory patterns that mirrored each other from O'ahu to Michigan State to Kansas City. Two more Punahou graduates of Samoan descent would make it to the NFL before the turn of the decade, including running back Mosi Tatupu. Tatupu became the second player born in American Samoa to make an NFL roster, as well as becoming the first offensive player of Samoan descent to not play on the offensive line. Tatupu would go on to have a lengthy career primarily as the running back for the New England Patriots, being named an All-Pro and elected to the Pro Bowl in 1986, one year after helping lead the Patriots to a tough Super Bowl loss to the legendary 1985 Chicago Bears. Tatupu's legacy would be carried down to his son, Lofa, who would go on to become an NFL star in his own right a few decades later - continuing the familial trend first seen with the Ane family.

Sports Illustrated's article "Shake 'Em Out of the Coconut Trees", published in 1976, pushed the narrative of the Samoan football player into relevance in the public and sports media

(Johnston 1976). The Samoan player was described as a ‘warrior’, with all the desirable traits of a football player (Johnston 1976). The year of 1976 also saw the beginnings of diversification in home states of Samoan NFL players, as five of the remaining nine players that made it to the NFL after the article’s publication played their high school football in California. This is consistent with California having one of the highest populations of Samoan people throughout the later twentieth century, but differing from the previous pattern that saw every Samoan player prior to this year that made it to the NFL attending high school in Hawai‘i.

The two remaining players were both born in American Samoa, but attended high school in New York and Washington, respectively. Quarterback Jack Thompson attended Evergreen High School in Seattle and was a highly touted prospect coming out of Washington State University, finishing ninth in Heisman Trophy voting in 1979. He was drafted third overall by the Cincinnati Bengals in the 1979 NFL Draft, with the recognition of his heritage consistently being recognized via his nickname - ‘The Throwin’ Samoan’ (Franks 2009). Thompson was a major figure in forming the image of the Samoan football player, as he was a highly touted prospect as well as a quarterback, the central figure on the team that often commands the most attention from the public. Like Uperesa, the frequent and consistent recognition of Thompson’s ethnic background reveals the significance of the Polynesian culture in the external perception of the Samoan football player as a whole.

Migratory Patterns of Samoan Football Players: The 1970’s

The 1970’s as a whole saw a sharp increase in the number of Samoan football players in the NFL, specifically in the latter half of the decade. By the end of the 1970’s, there had been

fifteen total players of Samoan descent debut in the National Football League, with twelve of those playing in that decade alone. The major boom in this increase temporally coincided with the first major sports publication on the topic in *Sports Illustrated*. This decade saw consistencies in home states of the Samoan players that made it to the NFL: ten of the twelve Samoan players of the 1970's went to high school in either Hawai'i or California, each with five players apiece during the decade.

Despite this heavy presence in these two locations (the two most common states for Samoans to migrate to when leaving the Samoan Islands), only four of the twelve Samoan players of the 1970's were born in the state that they graduated high school from. Five players were from American Samoa itself and migrated to Hawai'i or the US mainland as children, settling in popular Polynesian areas in Honolulu or the major cities of California. The colleges that these twelve players selected to attend, despite being partially reliant on which schools offer them a scholarship, began to reveal a pattern in migratory paths for the Samoan football player.

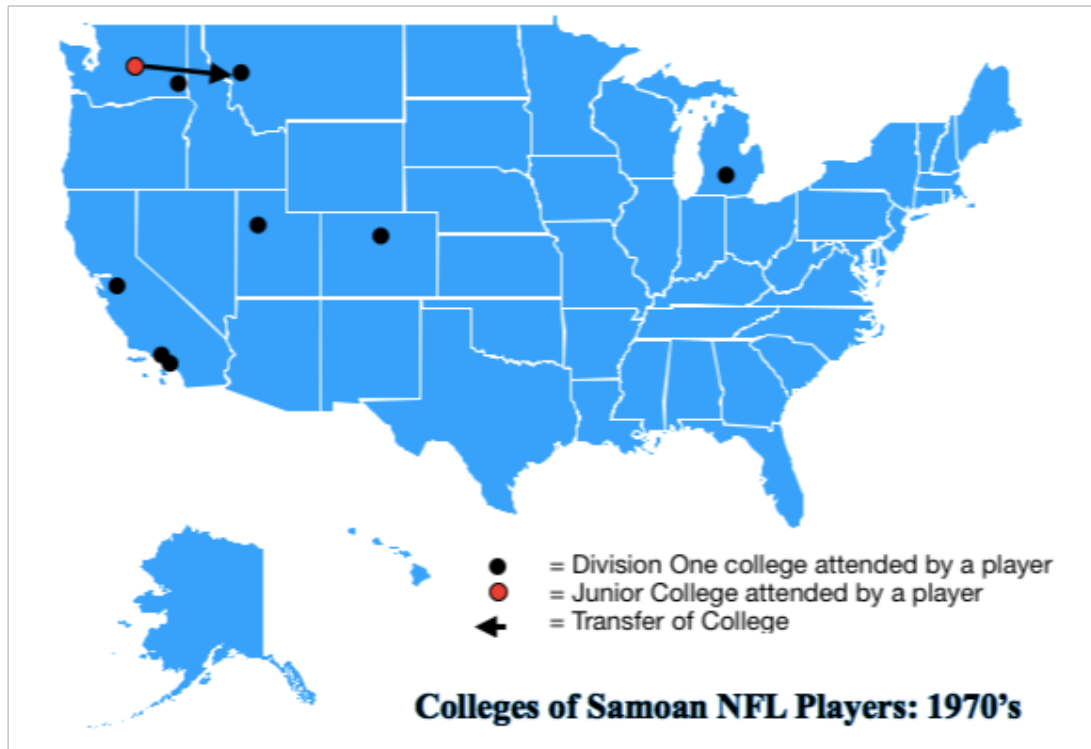
The migratory paths taken by the Samoan players in the 1970's tended to be towards schools in the western United States, with the majority of players (five) playing college football in California. Furthermore, the chosen universities were primarily schools in areas with prevalent Polynesian populations such as San Jose State University, and two Los Angeles based universities in the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and the University of Southern California (USC). While it could be expected that many of the Samoan players would attend universities in areas with a large Polynesian population, many of the players even opted to stay close to home if at all possible. This is exemplified by four of the five California based

players staying in California for college (three of those in their home metro areas), as well as Jack Thompson remaining in Washington.

The players' choices of college destination showed that they tend to prefer a level of familiarity or comfort in choosing where to play collegiate football. The communal and familial aspects of life, extremely important in Polynesian cultures, was surely a pull to these aspiring football players in their decision on where the best place was to pursue their academic and athletic careers. The significance of religion in Polynesian culture - specifically the Mormon Church - also came into play during the 1970's, with two of the twelve players during the decade attending Brigham Young University in Utah.

While ten of the twelve Samoan NFL players of the 1970's opted to play college football out west, there were two players that traveled a bit farther inland. Interestingly, there is still a consistency in the migratory patterns here. The two players of the 1970's who did not attend schools in the western United States were Jim Nicholson and Charles 'Kale' Ane III, the son of Charley Ane. Both players attended high schools in Honolulu and were one year apart in age. They both also attended Michigan State University - a school that had a history with Samoan players from Hawai'i with Bob Apisa starring for the team in the 1960's. The players were teammates during their time at Michigan State, and ended up as teammates again in the NFL as both began their professional careers with the Kansas City Chiefs.

Figure 2



The previous map shows the geographic locations of the universities attended by the Samoan NFL players of the 1970's. This desire for familiarity seen in the Samoan players mentioned previously can be observed in Michigan State University, a school in a place with little Polynesian background or history. The consistency of Samoan players attending Michigan State reveals the significance of communal connectivity and personal relations within the community of Samoan football players. Bob Apisa's career at Michigan State during the 1960's

paved the way for other Polynesian players, such as Jim Nicholson and Charles Ane III, to be provided the opportunity for free education and football in a place with little Polynesian history.

The exposure to the Polynesian football player that Bob Apisa provided for Michigan State's coaches and recruiters when he starred for the Spartans during the 1960's surely had an effect on the willingness and eagerness of the football staff to continue recruiting Samoan players. Michigan State recruited heavily in Honolulu after Apia's success, culminating in a large number of players from Hawai'i on Michigan State's rosters during the time period (Markham 2008). But this was not a one way street - Apisa's stardom popularized both the Samoan football player at Michigan State University and Michigan State University in the Samoan football community - specifically in Apisa's home state of Hawai'i. Apisa's significance in the Michigan State football community and the subsequent heavy recruiting in Hawai'i of Polynesian players by the Spartans' coaches could be seen as the first major indicator that there was a football sports region forming out in the Pacific Islands.

The jump in the number of Samoan players in the NFL in the late 1970's was significant not only for the sheer increase in the number of players and widening of the spatial diversity in their recruitment, but also with the emergence of skill position stars such as early first round quarterback Jack Thompson and All-Pro running back Mosi Tatupu. Many of the players that emerged in the late 1970's boom continued to play during the 1980's, with some of them succeeding in the limelight and furthering the external image of the Samoan players as 'warriors'. Five of the players would play in Super Bowls during the 1980's, with Terry Tautolo and Manu Tuiaosopo winning a few with the San Francisco 49ers dynasty of the decade. While these players that represented the first big wave in the Polynesian Pipeline would mostly retire in

the middle of the 1980's, they would soon be joined by a multitude of other Samoan players in the NFL at the turn of the decade.

Chapter Five

Samoan Players in the NFL During the 1980's and 1990's

In the 1980s, twenty three players of Samoan descent made their debuts in the NFL - more than the previous four decades combined (15). Despite this, the home states that they played their high school football in remained constant. All but two of the fifteen Samoan NFL players prior to 1980 played high school football in either California or Hawai'i before moving on to collegiate football. In addition to this, all but one of those fifteen players were born in either California, Hawai'i, or American Samoa itself. These birthplaces and concurrent home states of players during the time period of the 1970's and 1980's reflect the overall migration patterns of people from American Samoa to Hawai'i or the mainland US, usually in the western states, following the ending of US Naval Administration in American Samoa in 1951 (Markham 2008).

Concurrent with the trend seen in previous years, all twenty three of the Samoan players that made it to the NFL in the 1980's played high school football in either California or Hawai'i. Also concurrent with previous trends was the racial stacking of Samoan players, with twelve of the twenty three players playing either offensive or defensive line. The connections between the Samoan Islands, California, and Hawai'i continue to show in the migratory patterns of the players in the 1980's, with all twenty three players being born in either Hawai'i, California, American Samoa, or the independent nation of Samoa (formerly known as Western Samoa).

Jesse Markham noted in his work that the early 1980's marked the arrival of players trained and attending high school in American Samoa onto the division one circuit in the mainland United States (Markham 2008). The number of players that emigrated in their

childhoods from the Samoan Islands to California or Hawai'i also increased during this time, as well. While a large number of players of Samoan descent that made it to the NFL in the 1980's spent their high school years in California (12), only five of those were born and raised in California itself. Linemen Navy Tuiasosopo and George Achica, who was an All American defensive tackle at USC, were both raised in California, but became the sixth and seventh players in NFL history to be born in the American Samoa upon their debuts in the latter half of the decade.

The 1980's was also notable for seeing the first three players to ever play in the NFL that were born in the independent nation of Samoa (formerly Western Samoa). Linebacker Ricky Andrews played two seasons for Washington in the latter half of the decade. Richard Brown, another linebacker, came out of San Diego State University in 1987 to embark on a nine year NFL career that lasted well into the 1990's. The most famous of these players from the western side of the archipelago, however, is surely offensive lineman Jesse Sapolu.

Jesse Sapolu was born in what was then Western Samoa in 1961, the year before that section of the islands was granted independence from New Zealand. Sapolu then moved to and was raised in Hawai'i, where he starred at Farrington High School in the Kalihi section of Honolulu - similar to many past Samoan NFL players. Sapolu then chose to stay on O'ahu and attend the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, where he played on the offensive line until 1983. He was drafted by the San Francisco 49ers in the 1983 NFL Draft, where he was a mainstay on the offensive line during the great 49ers dynasty until his retirement in 1997. Despite playing on the offensive line - typically a less glamorous position with minimal recognition compared to positions such as quarterbacks, running backs, or wide receivers - Sapolu's consistent and

dominant presence for arguably the greatest dynasty in NFL history propelled him to star status during his illustrious career. Sapolu won four Super Bowls with San Francisco, made the Pro Bowl in both 1993 and 1994, and was named to the All Pro Team in both 1994 and 1995. Sapolu's football career ended with his retirement in 1997, but he still remains active in the football community. Sapolu is a co-founder of the Polynesian Football Hall of Fame, and active in assisting youth football players of Polynesian descent in their journeys throughout football. Sapolu's tenure at the University of Hawai'i was marked with successful seasons that saw some of his teammates make it to the NFL, as well. Many of these players at the University of Hawai'i were of Polynesian descent - specifically Samoan, including Sapolu.

The University of Hawai'i's role as a major university for Samoan football players in the 1980's was largely due to the effects of head coach Dick Tomey - a former UCLA positions coach and coordinator who had previously recruited players such as Terry Tautolo, the first Samoan NFL player to attend a California high school. Tomey would become the head coach of the University of Hawai'i football team in 1977, and would soon become one of the premier producers of Samoan players to the NFL. This is an example of how simple exposure to the Samoan football player had such a significant impact on the migratory patterns of future Samoan players.

The University of Hawai'i's football team joined the division one program of NCAA football in 1974. They played as an independent school until 1979, when they joined the Western Athletic Conference (WAC). This is where Tomey, the coach of the University of Hawai'i team at the time, became largely credited as being the first collegiate coach to largely recruit players of Polynesians descent (Syken 2003). Tomey's teams at the University of Hawai'i were notable

for recruiting players from American Samoa itself - one of the first to do so, as noted in Jesse Markham's paper (Markham 2008). Tomey's teams featuring players from Tutu'ila such as Moamoa Vaeao and brothers Bob and Tala Edwards began a series of winning seasons that legitimized the program at the division one level, including a combined 17-5 record in the 1980 and 1981 seasons. Tomey would leave UH Manoa in 1987 with an overall record of 63-46-3 with the program - what is now the third most wins in school history. The players recruited as freshmen during Tomey's last year as head coach would also go on to have more successful seasons in 1988 and 1989 during what would have been their junior and senior seasons, going 18-6-1 during that span.

Prior to Tomey's tenure as the Warriors' coach, the University of Hawai'i had seen fifteen players in total ever drafted to the NFL. During Tomey's ten year tenure as coach, twenty two players were drafted into the NFL, including nineteen between 1982 and 1987. Tomey left the UH program before the 1987 football season, but three more of his recruits that remained in school after his departure would be drafted by 1990. The legacy left by Tomey on the University of Hawai'i's football team was marked by both winning seasons and the heavy number of draftees from his teams moving onto the NFL compared to previous UH teams. Many of Tomey's UH players that graduated to the NFL - seven of the twenty two - were of Samoan descent.

Familial and community connections between Samoan football players again come to the surface on Tomey's teams in the 1980's at the University of Hawai'i. The Tuinei brothers, Tom and Mark, would both make NFL rosters in the early 1980's, with Mark making two Pro Bowls and winning three Super Bowls as a part of the Dallas Cowboys dynasty of the early 1990's.

Both brothers emigrated to Hawai‘i from Oceanside, California as children, and graduated high school on O‘ahu before each playing for the University of Hawai‘i. Mark played on the offensive line at the University of Hawai‘i with the aforementioned Sapolu, with both of them coming out of UH to the NFL in 1983. Linebacker Falaniko ‘Niko’ Noga, Jesse Sapolu’s classmate at Farrington High School in Honolulu, went from the Warriors to the NFL in 1984 and embarked on a seven year career in pro football. His younger brother Pete, also a Farrington graduate, would play for the St. Louis Rams in 1987. The other Noga brother - Alapati ‘Al’ Noga, also a graduate of Farrington High School - would become the ninth player in NFL history to be born in American Samoa when he came out of the University of Hawai‘i in 1988. A dominant defensive lineman, Al Noga was named the 1986 WAC Defensive Player of the Year as well as an AP First Team All American during his time at UH. He would be selected by the Minnesota Vikings in the third round of the 1988 NFL Draft, and embark on a successful five-year playing career.

Similar to the trend seen in the Samoan players of the 1970’s, the connections between California, Hawai‘i, and the Samoan Islands remained constant and easy to recognize when analyzing the migratory paths taken by the Samoan football players of the 1980’s. There was also continuation in the familial connections within the Samoan football community, as seen by the success of the Tuinei and Noga brothers. The connections between Hawai‘i, California, and the Samoan Islands are clearly visible, with each and every Samoan player up through the 1990 season having been born in one of the three places. These spatial consistencies further solidify the forming of not only American Samoa, but the entire Samoan diaspora as a whole as part of a football sports region.

Migratory Patterns of Samoan Football Players: The 1980's

The spatial consistencies of birth and home states of Samoan players through the 1980's also carried over to the universities that the players chose to attend for their collegiate football career. The prevalence of California schools among the players that also attended high school in California is consistent with the patterns seen previously among the Samoan players in the 1970's. This is also seen in the incredibly heavy number of players from Hawai'i staying on their home island to attend and play football for Dick Tomey at the University of Hawai'i. Of the nine Samoan NFL players in the 1980's that attended high schools in Hawai'i, a staggering eight of them chose to stay on O'ahu and play for Tomey. The lone player that did not, David Fonoti, stayed out west and attended Arizona State University. Five of these players, including Jesse Sapolu, attended the public Farrington High School. This continued the tendency for Samoan football players to prefer to stay close to their families and in a familiar community when selecting where to play college, as seen in the player boom of the late 1970's.

This continued throughout the 1980's, and the players from California during this time exemplify just how strong these communal ties are when selecting a college. Many of these players not only stayed within California, but in one of the nearest major cities from where they grew up. John Tautolo, an offensive lineman born and raised in the Los Angeles area who played for his hometown UCLA in college, made his debut for the New York Giants in 1982. Defensive lineman Dan Saleaumua went from his home area of San Diego just across state lines to Arizona State University before embarking on an eleven year NFL career that saw him make the All Pro team in 1990 and the Pro Bowl in 1995. Natu Tuatagaloa, another defensive lineman, grew up in the Bay Area prior to playing for the University of California - Berkeley and moving onto the

NFL's Cincinnati Bengals. Running back Taivale 'Junior' Tautalatasi went from his Bay Area high school to nearby Chabot College, a junior college, continuing the trend of using junior college as a springboard to obtaining a scholarship to a division one program. Tautalatasi then transferred to Washington State for the remainder of his career, and played three seasons in the NFL between the Philadelphia Eagles and Dallas Cowboys.

Players that did choose to leave their home cities almost entirely migrated to places with a relatively significant Polynesian community, such as Utah, Washington state, or major cities in California such as Los Angeles. Arizona State University and Washington State University sent two Samoan players each to the NFL during the decade. The University of Washington and Utah State University each had one Samoan player that graduated to the NFL, as did five California schools (University of California - Berkeley, San Diego State, San Jose State, UCLA, and USC).

In addition to spatial continuities in the migratory patterns of the players, religion also continued its trend of significance in the players' collegiate choices. After Tomey's legendary teams at the University of Hawai'i, Brigham Young University was the next most popular college destination for Samoan players of the 1980's, and all four players that attended BYU played high school football in California. BYU thus continued its trend it started in the 1970's of recruiting Samoan football players. BYU has the advantage of being the home university of the LDS church. The connection between the Mormon Church and Polynesian culture is quite strong, and BYU proved itself to be influential in this manner by being a top destination for Samoan football players in both the 1970's and the 1980's. This reveals the prevalence of religion within the Samoan community, confirmed by scholar Jesse Markham's work revealing

that family and church were two common and significant themes for football players of Samoan descent (Markham 2008).

Safety Glen Kozlowski, younger brother of former NFL player Mike Kozlowski, was one of the players to attend BYU during this decade. The recognition and preference to sign players of familial ties in sports is not unique to football, and Glen Kozlowski's appearance in the NFL years after his brother Mike is yet another example of familial relationships within the Samoan football community. The familial and religious ties seen in the younger Kozlowski's appearance in the NFL highlights the importance of each in the journey of the Samoan football player. These connections can be seen visibly when comparing migratory patterns of Samoan players from each decade. The map below is the map from the previous section of colleges attended by Samoan players of the 1970's, while the map on the top of the next page is one of colleges attended by the Samoan players of the 1980's.

Figure 3

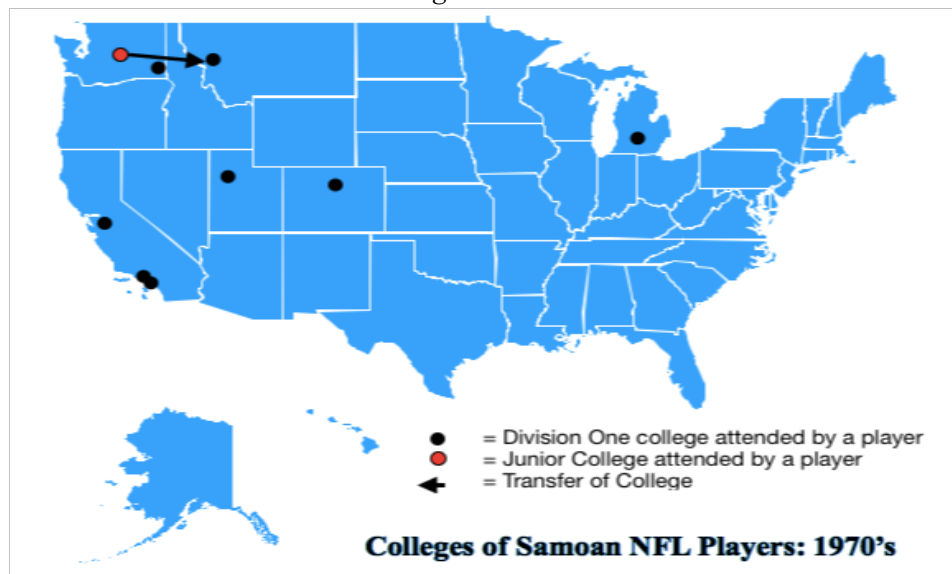
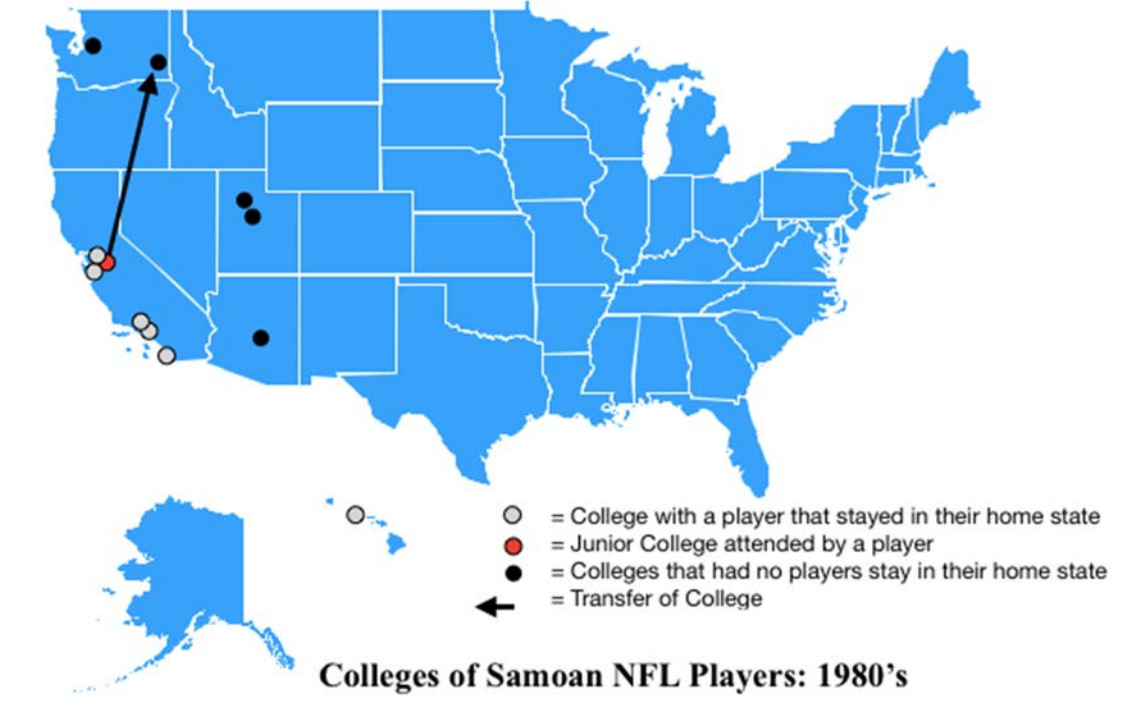


Figure 4



Each dot represents a university attended by Samoan players in the NFL regardless of the number of players that attended. While there were markedly more players of Samoan descent in the 1980's than there were previously, these maps reveal continuity in the chosen migratory patterns. Each player attended a school in the western United States, and, as stated earlier in this section, most opted to stay in their home city to attend college - further solidifying the consistencies in the migratory patterns. The arrows represent a player who went from a junior college to a division one program before embarking on their NFL career, another trend seen throughout the history of the Samoan football player. A notable addition here in the 1980's is the University of Hawai'i, from which eight of the twenty three Samoan players of the decade are

alumni. The next most common school selected by players in this decade was BYU with four, further confirming the significance of religion in the Polynesian football community.

The 1980's saw a staggering increase in the number of players of Samoan descent on NFL rosters, well surpassing the number of players in all previous decades combined. Despite that significant increase, there remained consistent patterns in both the birth places, home states, and collegiate destinations of these Samoan players. Players frequently opted to remain at or close to home for college, or choosing to attend a school in a place with a prevalent Polynesian population. This includes players that attended a junior college before moving onto a major university before the NFL; in most cases, both the junior colleges and the subsequent universities were often in western states, specifically in areas with prevalent Polynesian communities.

The perceived sports region encapsulating Samoan football players was just beginning to take shape during the 1980's. The staggering increase in player numbers led to increased diversification in the specific universities chosen, yet the geographical locations of these universities remained constant with past trends. The University of Hawai'i and BYU established themselves as the major universities for Samoan (and other Polynesian) players, while colleges throughout California and the rest of the western US began to recruit Samoan players during this time. Dick Tomey's teams at the University of Hawai'i were a major catalyst to the beginnings of the formation of the sports region during the 1980's. When teams from the mainland played the University of Hawai'i, they were playing nearly an entire *team* of Polynesian players, allowing for greater visibility for the Samoan football community as a whole. The external perception of Tomey's teams and its player composition was further fueled when looking at the racial stacking of Samoan graduates from the University of Hawai'i to the NFL during the

1980's: four of the eight players played on the line, and two others were linebackers. Another player was a running back - who ran behind the incredibly successful offensive lines of the decade. Tomey's tactic of heavily recruiting Polynesian players would prove successful during his run as the coach at the University of Hawai'i prior to his departure in 1987. His legacy in the Samoan football community, however, was far from finished.

Samoan NFL Players: 1990's

The 1980's was a very significant time in the history of the Samoan football player, primarily due to the sheer increase in player numbers in that decade. There were also other significant aspects to the time period, such as the consistency in both birth and home states and migratory patterns of the players as well as continuity in the effects of familial connections and religion within the Samoan football community. Coach Dick Tomey and the University of Hawai'i's recruitment of players from American Samoa itself and continuous presence of Samoan (and other Polynesian) players was also a major aspect of the eighties. The turn of the decade brought yet another significant event to the history of the Samoan football player. In 1990, a linebacker named Junior Seau was drafted early in the first round out USC via Oceanside, California. Oceanside is a city near San Diego with a historically large Samoan population ever since people from American Samoa began significantly migrating to the US in 1951, mainly due to its proximity to military bases - a common career choice for people from American Samoa (Tengan & Markham 2009). Seau was a highly touted prospect coming out of USC after posting 19 sacks during the 1989 season and being a unanimous first team All-American selection.

Seau's incredible skill and wild style of play on the field quickly made him one of the faces of the franchise in his home area of San Diego. He responded perfectly, by carving out a whopping twenty season career in the NFL that culminated in many accolades and honors. Seau was named a first team All-Pro eight times, and a second team All-Pro two times - in addition to being named to twelve Pro Bowls. He was named the NFL's Defensive Player of the Year in 1992. He was named to the NFL's 1990's All-Decade Team. Seau's immediate impact on the NFL in the beginning of the 1990's provided the opportunity for the spread of the popularity of the Samoan football player beyond the historically significant areas directly related to them.

Beyond Seau's remarkable accomplishments on the field, he was also legend in the sports community, the Samoan community, and the Polynesian community as a whole. Seau's passionate and wanton playing style perfectly encapsulated the image of the Samoan warrior enveloped in the 1976 *Sports Illustrated* article, further captivating football audiences on the Samoan football player as an individual (Johnston 1976). Seau's illustrious career lasted significantly longer and was much more successful than most other players to ever suit up in the NFL, and it rightfully ended with an induction to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2015.

Fifteen players of Samoan descent during the 1990's played high school football in California, and nine of those were born and raised in the state. Three other graduates of Oceanside High School in California would in Junior Seau's footsteps to the NFL in the 1990's alone. Quarterback Tony Banks, born and raised in San Diego, followed in the footsteps of some past Samoan players as he attended and played for Michigan State University in the middle of the decade. Banks further propelled the image of the Samoan football player to new heights, as his visibility as a quarterback made him much more prevalent in sports and general media. Banks

would be the first quarterback drafted in 1996, and immediately become the starting quarterback for the St. Louis Rams. His presence in the NFL lasted for nearly a decade, and was highlighted by being crowned a Super Bowl champion with the Baltimore Ravens in 2000.

Hawai‘i also continued its role as a prominent home state for Samoan NFL players, with nine such players signing professional contracts during the 1990’s. One of these players, Ta’ase Faumui, was born in independent Samoa and was yet another Samoan player to graduate from Honolulu’s Farrington High School. Farrington produced another graduate that went on to the NFL during the 1990’s in Pat Kesi, another offensive lineman. Other schools around O‘ahu then began to have players recruited by schools on the US mainland at a rising rate. These players were primarily linemen, but also included well known running back Chris Fuamatu-Ma’afala as well as tight end Itula Mili, who was the second Kahuku High School graduate to ever make it to the NFL and the first since Leo Reed in the 1960’s.

Despite the heavy percentage of Samoan players during the 1990’s growing up in Hawai‘i or California, the decade was also notable for having a few Samoan players that grew up in states with much smaller populations of Samoans. Si’ulagi ‘Lonnie’ Palelei was an offensive lineman that was born in Nu’uuli, American Samoa, the eleventh such player in NFL history, but grew up in Blue Springs, Missouri. Blue Springs is in the western portion of the state, near the city of Independence, Missouri - a major city in the LDS religion - and has a sizable Samoan population compared to other areas of the midwestern United States. Palelei represents the first player of Samoan descent raised in the midwest to make it to the NFL, and his migratory pattern through collegiate football again highlights the desire for familiarity in selection of place. Palelei originally attended Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. Indiana, as of the 2010 US

Census, had a total Pacific Islander population that was well under one percent of its total populace (0.0009%). Palelei would ultimately transfer to the University of Nevada - Las Vegas during his time in college, where Pacific Islanders make up a full 1% of the population. Palelei's choice to transfer to a school in an area with a higher population of Polynesians is consistent with the other collegiate destinations chosen by players in the past.

Defensive lineman Luther Elliss was born and raised in Mancos, Colorado, at the southwestern edge of the state by the Four Corners border area. Elliss graduated from Mancos High School and moved onto the University of Utah, continuing both trends of Samoan players opting to stay somewhat close to home when attending college while simultaneously selecting a locale with a prevalent Polynesian population. Elliss would have a successful career at Utah, being named a consensus All-American for his efforts in 1994. He was drafted by the Detroit Lions in the 1994 NFL Draft, and embarked on a successful nine year playing career that saw him elected to two Pro Bowls. Elliss would retire in 2004, and currently enjoys his life as the team chaplain for his hometown Denver Broncos (O'Hara 2016). This is another example of how the significance of religion and the church in the Samoan community plays a large role in the life journeys of the Samoan players. Elliss' path through football, despite being from a place not historically associated with Samoan people, follows many of the migratory patterns and consistencies seen in other Samoan players throughout history.

Fullback Michael Sellers was born in Frankfurt, Germany to a Samoan mother and an American father who was serving in the military. The family relocated as a youth to Washington state, where Sellers attended North Thurston High School in Lacey, WA. Sellers followed in the footsteps of previous Samoan players by attending Walla Walla Community College, also in

Washington, yet Sellers did not transfer to a major division one school to continue his football career. Rather, Sellers was named a junior college All-American during his time at Walla Walla CC, and was signed by the Edmonton Eskimos of the Canadian Football League. He ended up being signed as an undrafted free agent by the Washington Redskins of the NFL, and continued to play professional football through the 2011 season. Sellers' remarkable journey through the American football system via community college and the Canadian Football League culminated in his voting to a Pro Bowl in 2008. While he was born in Germany, a unique anomaly in the world of the Samoan football player, his migratory paths through schools Washington state remains consistent with those of past Samoan players regarding the intended collegiate destinations and desire to be close to home.

While the 1990's was notable for the appearance of Samoan players from places seen as non-traditionally 'Polynesian', such as the aforementioned Elliss, Sellers, and Palelei, the major landmark event of the 1990's for football in the Samoan community came in the 1998 season. During that season, linebacker Spencer Reid became the first graduate of a high school in American Samoa to play an NFL game. Reid graduated from Leone High School on Tutu'ila before attending BYU to play football. He played three NFL seasons for the Carolina Panthers and Indianapolis Colts before retiring from professional football in 2000. Reid's migratory path from American Samoa to BYU not only solidifies the importance of religion for many Samoan football players, but also continues the trend seen previously in attending colleges in areas with a noticeable Polynesian population. Reid's career in the NFL may not have lasted as long as other Samoan players in the past, but the impact his NFL career made back home in American Samoa would soon send shockwaves through the rest of the American football system. These

shockwaves would be easily identified in the coming NFL seasons, as more and more Samoans began to make their way to professional football.

Migratory Patterns of Samoan Football Players: The 1990s

Despite the growing variety of home states for Samoan football players in the 1990s, there did remain consistencies in the migratory patterns of the Samoan football players of the decade. Schools in the western United States - particularly in metropolitan areas with noticeable populations of Polynesians - dominated the recruiting scene, with only two players attending schools outside of the western region (Tony Banks at Michigan State University and Nicky Sualua at Ohio State University). The decade also saw Mike Sellers continue the trend of attending junior college out of high school, yet Sellers took a bit of an unorthodox route by not transferring to a division one school and opting to play in the Canadian Football League prior to his NFL career. The significance of Sellers' decision to use junior college to his advantage - as players like Charles Ane, Tu'ufuli Uperesa, and Junior Tautalatasi had done in the past - is compounded with his decision to remain in his home state of Washington to do so.

The desire to remain close to home continued through the 1990's, with many of the Samoan players of the decade opting to play collegiate football in their home states. The only two Samoan players to come out of the University of Hawai'i during the decade both played high school football on O'ahu. Only six players attended colleges located in California - a marked decrease in percentage from previous decades - yet five of those players played their high school football in California. Furthermore, those five players tended to stay within a close by metropolitan area for school. The three colleges in California attended by those five players -

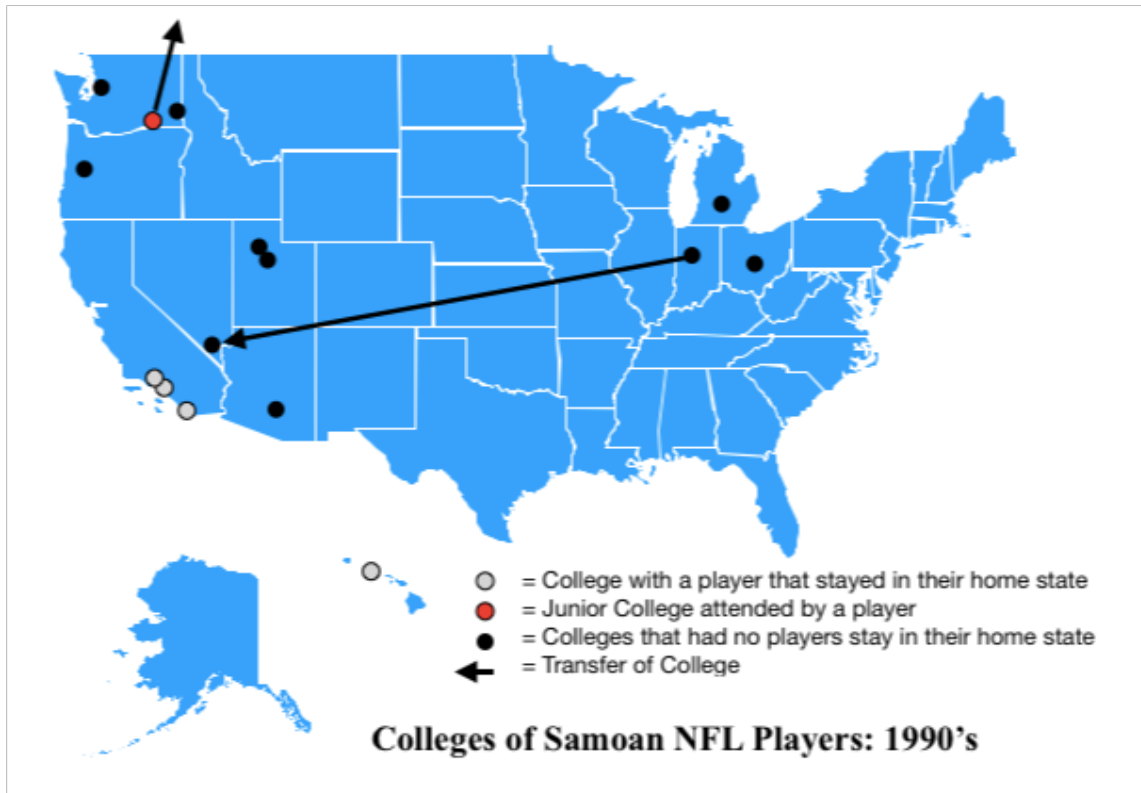
UCLA, San Diego State, and USC - are all located in southern California. All five players of Samoan descent that stayed in southern California for college also played their high school football in southern California.

The significance of community and familial connections is reflected in the continuous attendance of schools in either the player's home city or metropolitan areas with high Polynesian populations, as well as the few schools outside of these areas. The perfect example of this would be Michigan State's quarterback Tony Banks, who became the third Michigan State alumni of Samoan descent to make it to the NFL. The communal connection between Samoans and Michigan State University can be traced back through Bob Apisa in the 1960's, and up through the 1970's as more Polynesian players began to suit up for the Spartans. However, the connections through coaching and recruiting are most strongly seen in the 1990's football teams at the University of Arizona.

Prior to the 1990's, no Samoan NFL player had ever gone to the University of Arizona. In 1987, the Wildcats hired Dick Tomey as their new head coach. Tomey, the former coach at the University of Hawai'i who turned the football program there into a Polynesian powerhouse, quickly changed that statistic. Tomey's teams at the University of Arizona led all colleges with five Samoan players during the 1990's that moved on to the NFL, with Brigham Young University close behind at four. The connections that are held in the Samoan football community between a familiar or communal setting as well as religion are exemplified by the two schools with the most Samoan players to graduate to the NFL during the decade. It is also worth noting that as of this writing, only two more Samoan players have gone from the University of Arizona

to the NFL after Tomey's retiring. The following map shows the college destinations of the Samoan players who debuted in the NFL during the 1990's:

Figure 5



Western schools still dominate the trend, with a few new additions among those states in Oregon and Nevada. Michigan State makes another appearance with Tony Banks' career in the NFL. Ohio State University became the first university outside of the western United States to send a Samoan player to the NFL with fullback Nicky Sualua signing with the Dallas Cowboys in 1997. The University of Hawai'i produced significantly less professional players of Samoan descent in the 1990's than it had when Dick Tomey was leading the team. The University of

Arizona, however, had the most players of any school in the 1990's. The following table shows all NFL players of Samoan descent that played collegiately under Dick Tomey:

Table 1

NFL Players of Samoan Descent That Played Under Dick Tomey

School	Player (First Pro Season)	Tomey's Position On the Coaching Staff
UCLA	Terry Tautolo (1976)	Defensive Coordinator & Defensive Backs Coach
University of Hawaii	Tom Tuinei (1980) Jerry Scanlan (1980) Jesse Sapolu (1983) Mark Tuinei (1983) Niko Noga (1984) Nu'u Fa'aola (1986) Pete Noga (1987) Al Noga (1988)	Head Coach
University of Arizona	Mu Tagoai (1995) Pulu Poumele (1997) Van Tuinei (1997) Joe Salave'a (1998) Edwin Mulitalo (1999)	Head Coach

The high number of Samoan players that came out of the University of Hawai'i under Tomey's tenure in the 1980's was essentially transferred to his new team at the University of Arizona during the 1990's. Both schools produced the most Samoan NFL players among all colleges in the respective decades that Tomey was the coach of the team. Tomey's role in facilitating the Polynesian Pipeline through the collegiate system allowed for his coaching and recruiting of 13 of the 51 total Samoan NFL players that made it to the NFL in the 1980's and 1990's. While Tomey would stop coaching in 2000, his careers at the University of Hawai'i and the University of Arizona make him a major factor in the creation of a perceived sports region surrounding American Samoa and the Samoan diaspora.

The 1990's was a significant time in the development of the Samoan football player for a multitude of reasons. The decade not only saw the first cases of emergence of players from areas not traditionally associated with Polynesians - such as Luther Elliss (CO) or Lonnie Palele (MO) - but also continued to produce players from California and Hawai'i, the two most popular home states by far. The emergence of Junior Seau as a true superstar further solidified the image of the Samoan warrior in football circles around America, and this culminated in Spencer Reid's ascension from Leone High School in American Samoa itself to the NFL by way of BYU. Below is a table of home states of Samoan NFL players prior to the 2000 season:

Table 2

Home State of Samoan NFL Players Prior to 2000 - By Decade

Decade	Home States
1940's	Hawaii - 1
1950's	Hawaii - 1
1960's	Hawaii - 1
1970's	California - 5 Hawaii - 5 New York - 1 Washington - 1
1980's	California - 13 Hawaii - 10
1990's	California - 15 Hawaii - 9 American Samoa - 1 Colorado - 1 Missouri - 1 Washington - 1

Home states of NFL players of Samoan descent began to diversify in the 1990's, while numbers in California and Hawai'i remained relatively stagnant. From Al Lolotai's debut in 1945 up until 1989, 36 of the 38 players of Samoan descent that made it to the NFL played high

school football in Hawai‘i or California - a whopping 95% rate. When the 1990’s is accounted for, 60 of the 66 players of Samoan descent played high school football in California or Hawai‘i - a percentage that cumulatively drops to 91%. This slight dip in percentage indicates that Samoan players are not only growing up in different areas of the United States, but are succeeding enough to be recruited despite their position in a non-traditional area for Samoan football players.

Arguably the most significant occurrence during the 1990’s, however, was the ascension of Spencer Reid to the NFL through BYU - another recruiting power among the Samoan community. Reid’s successful rise from Leone High School in American Samoa all the way to an NFL roster was the first glimpse of success for the establishment of football on the island of Tutu’ila that occurred back in the 1960’s. As more and more Samoan players from diaspora communities on the US mainland and in Hawai‘i made it to the NFL, coaches and players began to take note. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, it led collegiate recruiters to recognize the potentially untapped football talent that sat deep in the south Pacific in the Samoan archipelago.

Chapter Six:

Samoan Players in the Twenty First Century: Consistencies & Migratory Patterns

The 1990's saw a total of twenty eight players of Samoan descent debut in the National Football League, the highest total of any decade up to that point. In all NFL season prior to 1990, there had been thirty eight players of Samoan descent in the NFL - twenty three of them in the 1980's. The significant increase during both the 1970's and 1980's was buoyed in the 1990's with only a slight increase from the previous decade, but the turn of the millennium would bring about a new rise in the history of the Samoan football player.

There were twenty one players of Samoan descent that debuted in the NFL in the three seasons between 2000 and 2002. Among them, there were eight different home states in which they played high school football - a number that would increase to fourteen by the end of the decade. This is an increase from the seven different home states seen in all of the previous decades of the NFL combined, despite the significantly shorter time period. This was largely due to the influence of the military, as seen in the debut of players from Virginia, Texas, and Alaska. Some of these states have prominent Polynesian populations such as Utah. Other states, that had never before sent a Samoan player to the NFL, had their first during this decade.

In total, sixty six Samoan players would debut between the 2000 and 2009 NFL seasons. As seen in previous decades, the majority of them (19) played their high school football in California, such as wide receiver Michael Floyd and linebacker Rey Mauualuga. Also like previous decades, a pattern of migration to California and subsequent advancement to the NFL was again prevalent in the 2000's. Offensive lineman Kili Lefotu was born in Hawai'i before moving to California. Running back Reagan Maui'a moved from American Samoa to northern

California before going back to the middle of the Pacific to enroll at the University of Hawai‘i to play college football. Offensive lineman Chris Pino, continuing the relationship and involvement of the US Military in the lives of Samoan football players, was born in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The aforementioned Rey Maua-luga was born in Fort Sill, Oklahoma - another military location - before finishing high school in Humboldt County.

Along with California, Hawai‘i had long been a producer of Samoan NFL players, and the 2000’s was no different. Fourteen of the sixty seven Samoan players of the time period played high school football in Hawai‘i, with eight of them being born and raised there. There was increasing spatial diversity in geographic locales within Hawai‘i during this decade, as well. Radford, Kailua, and Leileihua High Schools, all on O‘ahu, each produced their first Samoan NFL player during the decade. Linebacker Kaluka Maiava attended Baldwin High School on the island of Maui, becoming the first player from Hawai‘i to attend high school on an island other than O‘ahu. Farrington High School, long the major producer of Samoan NFL players on O‘ahu, saw two more linemen debut in the NFL in Mario Fatafehi and Vince Manuwai in the 2001 and 2002 seasons, respectively. Manuwai became the ninth Farrington graduate to sign an NFL contract upon being drafted by the Jacksonville Jaguars. The early 2000’s, however, saw Kahuku High School, on O‘ahu’s North Shore, come into the football forefront in the Hawaiian Islands. Kahuku produced seven of the fourteen players from Hawai‘i during the decade.

While the school had produced two former NFL players in the past in Leo Reed and Itula Mili, there were three graduates of Kahuku that made it to the NFL in 2002 alone. Defensive lineman Jerry Togiai and offensive lineman Fa’aesea Mailo had brief stints in the NFL. Toniu Fonoti was a well-known offensive lineman out of Kahuku High School before becoming a

consensus first team All American at the University of Nebraska. The Cornhuskers, long known for their punishing offensive line, had never fielded a Samoan player prior to 1999 - when Fonoti came onto campus. Fonoti was called the school's best offensive lineman ever by the team's offensive line coach - no small feat considering the legendary lineman that have suited up for Nebraska. His unique pathway would soon have a Michigan State-like effect, as Fonoti was joined by four other Samoan players during his tenure at Nebraska (Feldman 2002).

Washington and Utah, two states that each have sizable populations of Polynesians, both produced sizable amounts of NFL players during this decade. Washington continued its trend of sporadic production of Samoan NFL players, while Utah had never had a Samoan player make it to the NFL prior to the 2000 season. Seven players during this decade went to high school in Utah, and all seven of those players played either offensive or defensive line. Four of those Utah raised players utilized the junior college route seen in many previous Samoan NFL players. Defensive lineman CJ Ah You originally played collegiately in Utah for BYU, but transferred out to Snow College before finally attending the University of Oklahoma. Ah You was the first Samoan NFL player to attend the University of Oklahoma, deciding that route was better than staying home and playing for BYU. Junior Ioane, attended Snow College in Utah before transferring to Arizona State University. Anton Palepoi stayed in Utah to attend Dixie College before transferring to UNLV. Nu'u Tafisi attended Mt. San Antonio CC in California before ultimately transferring to the University of California - Berkeley. Tafisi, who moved to Salt Lake City as a child from independent Samoa, became the sixth NFL player born in that part of the islands when he signed with the Seattle Seahawks in 2007.

Tafisi's Seattle teammate, linebacker Lofa Tatupu, is one example in the 2000's of the continuation of familial connections among Samoan NFL players, as well as one of a player from a unique state that stayed home for college. Tatupu, an All-Pro and three time Pro Bowler, graduated from high school in Massachusetts - largely due to his father Mosi's career as the New England Patriots' running back. Tatupu, despite having an NFL pedigree and being a dominant player in high school, opted to attend the University of Maine. The University of Maine is an associate member of the Colonial Athletic Association in division one college football - which plays in the lower level of division one collegiate football. The significance of Tatupu choosing to remain close to home cannot go unnoticed, especially considering he opted to attend a school that is an FCS member as opposed to the FBS powerhouse schools usually attended to gain notice by NFL scouts. His subsequent transfer to USC, a top level division one school, showcased the talent potential he had despite his original selection of a close-to-home college in the University of Maine.

Other familial legacies in the 2000's NFL include quarterback Marques Tuiasosopo. Tuiasosopo is the son of the aforementioned Manu, who played for the Seattle Seahawks during his career. Marques, like other Samoan players, stayed home for school and attended the University of Washington before embarking on his professional career. Jesse Markham noted the significant number of people in the Tuiasosopo family playing the NFL, with Marques playing at the highly publicized quarterback position for the Oakland Raiders for the better part of the 2000's (Markham 2008). Another second generation player debuted that season in tight end Brandon Manumaleuna, son of former NFL linebacker Frank Manumaleuga. Manumaleuna played a lengthy ten seasons in the NFL after being drafted by the then-St. Louis Rams in 2001.

Another player with familial ties in the Samoan football community to debut in the 2000's was Pittsburgh Steelers safety Troy Polamalu. Polamalu is cousins with the aforementioned Nicky Sualua, and his uncle Kennedy Polamalu is a longtime coach in both the collegiate and NFL ranks. Polamalu would quickly transform into one of the NFL's premier superstars, and simultaneously become a public face of the Samoan community. Polamalu's story is well known, moving from southern California to the home of relatives in Oregon where he graduated from Douglas High School before going back to the Los Angeles area where he enrolled with the USC Trojans. Polamalu was a highly touted prospect coming into the 2003 NFL Draft, as he was twice voted a first team All-American, the first USC player to do so in a decade. He was selected by the Pittsburgh Steelers with the 16th overall pick in the first round. He immediately stepped in as a starter, and wasted no time establishing himself in the eyes of the league as he made his first of eight career Pro Bowls in only his second season. When Polamalu retired at the end of his football career in 2014, he had accumulated a vast number of other accolades. He was a first-team All Pro four times, and a second-team All Pro two times. He was the NFL's Defensive Player of the Year in 2010. He was twice a Super Bowl champion and also named to the NFL's 2000's All Decade Team. Polamalu's career on the field surely has earned him a spot in the Pro Football Hall of Fame, following in the footsteps of former Samoan superstar Junior Seau.

Polamalu's presence on the field, however, was not simply notable due to his stellar play. Samoan players had traditionally worn long hair in the NFL, and Polamalu was no different. With Polamalu's notably long hair largely covering the name on the back of his jersey - not an unusual occurrence for Polynesian players of the time - he was quickly recognizable for any fan

watching in person or at home. Religion and family have always played a large role in Polamalu's life, something that media outlets have noted since his college days. Polamalu was also notable as being the first Samoan player to graduate high school in Oregon to make it to the NFL, and he was soon joined in the league by other Samoan players from unique home states.

Including Polamalu's home state of Oregon, there were eight new home states from which Samoan players made it to the NFL during the 2000's. Running back Nate Ilaoa graduated high school in Stafford, Virginia - site of a large marine base - before enrolling at the University of Hawai'i. Two players, Tui Alailefaleua and Mao Tosi, played their high school football in Alaska before moving on to the NFL. Texas also had its first two Samoan players in this decade, including defensive end Roy Miller. Miller graduated from Shoemaker High School in Killeen due to his father's career in the US military, a common trend among many Samoan players in the NFL.

Linebacker Josh Mauga was born and raised in Fallon, Nevada, a rural community east of Reno in the western part of the state where a US Military Naval air station is the largest employer. Mauga attended Churchill County High School before opting to move just west to Reno to attend the University of Nevada. Mauga would become the first Samoan NFL player to attend The University of Nevada upon his debut for the New York Jets in 2009. Mauga's choice to remain significantly close to home resonates with many stories of past Samoan NFL players, despite his unique position of growing up in Nevada.

Louis Murphy, a wide receiver who was born and raised in St. Petersburg, Florida, has enjoyed an NFL career since he debuted for the Oakland Raiders in 2009. Murphy is a mixture of Samoan and African-American descent, and became the first Samoan NFL player to grow up in

Florida when he was selected by Oakland in the 2009 NFL Draft. Murphy opted to stay home for college - continuing the trend seen in many previous Samoan players, regardless of home state - and won two national championships as a member of the Florida Gators.

While the number of Samoan players that have made NFL rosters rose significantly during this time period for both traditional and non-traditional player producing home states, the biggest increase - and perhaps the most significant - lies in American Samoa itself. Tight end Gabe Reid - brother of Spencer Reid, the first player from an American Samoan high school to make it to the NFL - debuted for the Chicago Bears in 2003. Like his brother, Gabe Reid attended Leone High School on Tutu'ila before attending BYU in Provo, Utah. The brothers, over a half of a century after Al Lolotai became the first player of Samoan descent to play in an NFL game, became two of the first three players to go to high school in American Samoa to make an NFL roster. The other was offensive lineman Pita Elisara, who graduated from Tafuna High School on Tutu'ila before attending Palomar College in southern California - near the prominent Polynesian community of Oceanside. Elisara, after some time on the junior college circuit, then made his way to the University of Indiana before signing with the New York Giants in 2001. Attendance at a junior college had been previously seen in many Samoan players, going as far back as some of the first players of Samoan descent in Charles Ane in the 1950's and Tu'ufuli Uperesa in the early 1970's. However, Elisara's journey from American Samoan high school to a US junior college prior to a major university would soon be revealed as major foreshadowing for many players coming from his background.

In the six seasons from 2004 through 2009, there were eight more players that debuted who played high school football in American Samoa itself. Incredibly, six of those eight went on

to play at a junior college in the mainland US before moving on to a division one football program. Two years after the flurry of media articles on Samoan football players were published by ESPN and *Sports Illustrated*, two defensive tackles made their NFL debuts in Isa'ako "Isaac" Sopoaga and Saousoalii Poe Siavii, Jr., who goes by Junior Siavii. Siavii went from Tafuna High School in American Samoa to what was then Dixie State Junior College (now Dixie State University) in Utah. He transferred first to Butte Community College in California before moving on to the University of Oregon. He was drafted out of Oregon by the Kansas City Chiefs early in the second round in the 2004 NFL Draft.

Sopoaga's story of growing up in American Samoa, including commentary on the way his Samoan culture is related to football, was documented in the film "Polynesian Power", narrated by Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson, as well as many news and media publications of the time (Pennington & Spear, 2005). "Polynesian Power" tells the stories of University of Hawai'i teammates Sopoaga and Pisa Tinoisamoa, chronicling their journeys as Samoan football players and their culture's place in the sport. Sopoaga graduated from Samoana High School, and first attended College of the Canyons in California. Sopoaga absolutely dominated the junior college circuit, and was highly recruited by major division one programs. He opted to attend the University of Hawai'i, and was ultimately selected in the fourth round of the 2004 NFL Draft by the San Francisco 49ers, making him the fourth player to play high school football on Tutu'ila to play in the NFL.

The next season of 2005 saw Tafuna High School classmates Shaun Nua and Jonathan Fanene -both defensive linemen - make their debuts in the NFL. Nua would attend Eastern Arizona Junior College before transferring to BYU, and would go on to win a Super Bowl with

the Pittsburgh Steelers before retiring in 2008. Fanene went to the College of the Canyons in California, where he was a teammate of Sopoaga's. He would eventually transfer to the University of Utah, where he was drafted by the Cincinnati Bengals in the 2005 Draft.

During the next NFL season in 2006, defensive lineman and Samoana High School graduate Domata Peko followed the path of Sopoaga and Fanene to the College of the Canyons. While Sopoaga and Fanene transferred to areas with large Samoan populations in Hawai'i and Utah, Peko opted to attend Michigan State University. Michigan State University had been the sole constant collegiate destination for Samoan players outside of the western United States since the 1960's. Peko's decision to transfer there - and subsequent success in a Spartan uniform - led him to being drafted by the Cincinnati Bengals in the 2006 NFL Draft. Peko became the eighth player in NFL history to play high school football in American Samoa.

Paul Soliai was born in Santa Ana, California, but graduated high school from Nu'uuli Poly Tech High School in American Samoa. Soliai made the unique decision to originally attend Coffeyville Community College in southern Kansas. He eventually transferred to the University of Utah, where he received second team all-conference honors in 2006 before being drafted in the fourth round of the 2007 NFL Draft by the Miami Dolphins. Also during the 2007 NFL season, Melila Purcell played with the Cleveland Browns. Purcell, also a defensive lineman, graduated from Leone High School in American Samoa and attended the University of Hawai'i. Also in 2007, another defensive lineman in Matt Toeaina made it to the NFL out of the University of Oregon, where he was recruited out of Samoana High School on Tutu'ila. Toeaina became the eleventh player in NFL history to play high school football in American Samoa itself when he debuted for the Cincinnati Bengals.

The series of media publications that came out from the turn of the millennium to just before the 2003 season coincided with the largest increase in both player numbers and diversification of home states and collegiate destinations that had been seen thus far. The sixty-seven players that debuted in the 2000's represented both traditional and new home states, and both continued the trends seen in previous migratory patterns of college selection. New paths were forged by these players. While the traditional home states of California and Hawai'i continued to produce NFL players, this time period began to see new home states pop up that had never produced an NFL player of Samoan descent. In addition to this increase, ten more players during this decade alone advanced from American Samoan high schools to professional football - a marked difference from the one that had made it in all of the decades prior. These factors combined to aid in creating a perceived sports region around the Samoan diaspora early in the new millennium.

Migratory Patterns of Samoan Football Players: 2000's

The decade of the 2000's was a groundbreaking time in the history of the Samoan football player. Many new home states began to pop up, yet migratory patterns remained consistent with years past. The migratory connections between the Samoan and Hawaiian Islands and the state of California continued during this era, with those three places being the largest producers of Samoan football players during these seasons. While California and Hawai'i had long been at the forefront of the Samoan football community, the sharp rise in the number of NFL players that finished high school in American Samoa was a new occurrence. It was also one that directly followed the plethora of media publications in the early 2000's.

These players from American Samoa had an overwhelming majority attend junior colleges on the US mainland prior to playing division one football. Seven of the ten players from American Samoa during the time period first chose to attend junior colleges, with three of them attending the College of the Canyons in California. Other junior college destinations included Coffeyville Community College in rural Kansas (Paul Soliai), Eastern Arizona Junior College (Shaun Nua), and Dixie State in Utah (Junior Siavii). Even after transferring to major universities, these players largely continued to remain in areas with prominent Polynesian populations. Soliai and Jonathan Fanene transferred to the University of Utah. Shaun Nua opted to attend BYU. Junior Siavii attended the University of Oregon. Isaac Sopoaga transferred from the College of the Canyons to the University of Hawai'i. Domata Peko continued the pipeline through East Lansing as he opted to attend Michigan State University. The collegiate destinations chosen by the players who played high school football in American Samoa are consistent with previous generations of Samoan players, including the tendency to use junior college as a springboard to a division one program. Following this paragraph is a table of all of the junior colleges attended by Samoan NFL players up through the end of the 2000's by decade.

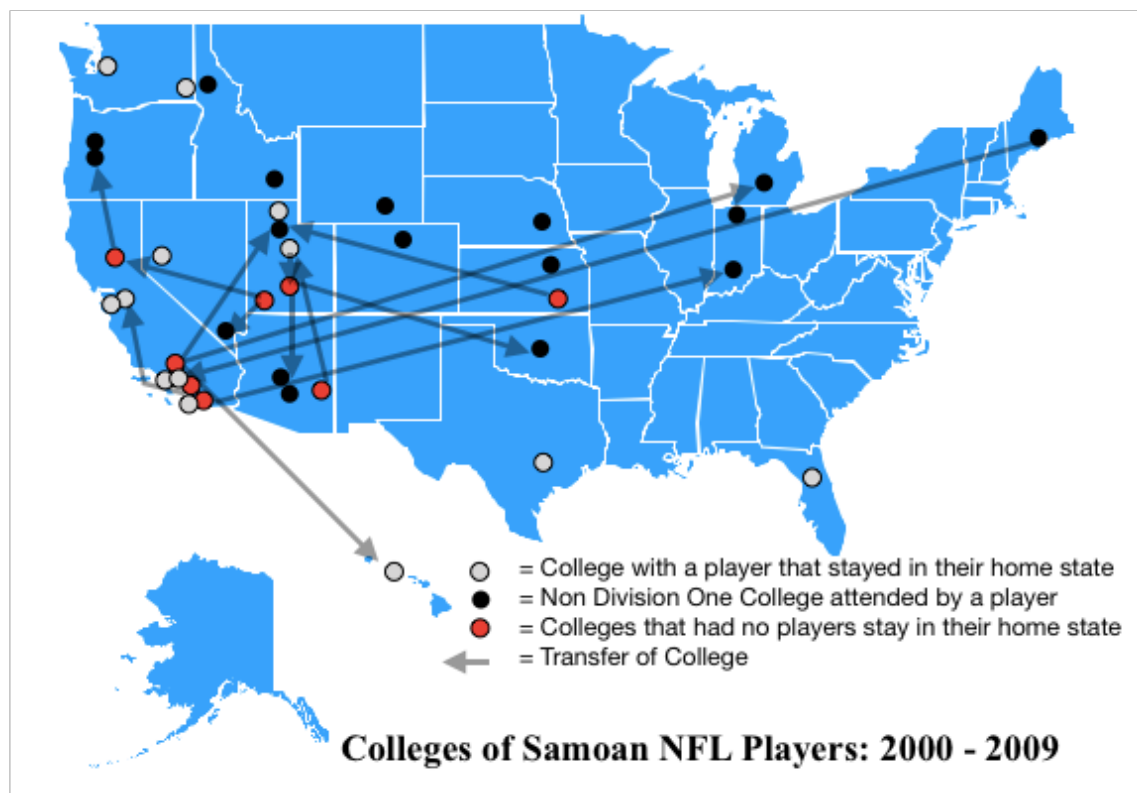
Table 3

Junior Colleges Attended by NFL Players of Samoan Descent - By Decade							
	1940's	1950's	1960's	1970's	1980's	1990's	2000's
Butte Community College (CA)							1
Chabot College (CA)					1		
Coffeyville Community College (KS)							1
College of the Canyons (CA)							3
Compton Community College (CA)		1					
Dixie State University (UT)							2
Eastern Arizona Junior College (AZ)							1
Mt. San Antonio Community College (CA)							1
Palomar College (CA)							1
Snow College (UT)							2
Walla Walla Community College (WA)						1	
Weber Junior College (UT)	1						
Wenatchee Valley College (WA)				1			

The significant jump in the 2000's is largely due to the players from American Samoa itself, seven of whom attended junior college directly out of high school. These junior colleges are nearly all in the western United States, but are also in a wide variety of places. Similar to the junior colleges, the players of the Samoan diaspora that made it to the NFL during this time period attended a much wider variety of colleges overall than those in previous decades. The University of Hawai'i remained the premier destination, rostering the most Samoan players during this time span with nine. Six of those players made their debut during the 2007 season, following the University of Hawai'i's most successful season to date in 2006. Just behind the University of Hawai'i were two commonly seen universities for Samoan football players in USC and BYU, who sent eight and five Samoan players respectively to the NFL during this time span. Four of the six players who attended USC played high school California, and Troy Polamalu was

born and spent the first few years of his life in California before moving to Oregon before high school. This continues the trend of Samoan players staying relatively close to home when selecting among schools that offered them a scholarship. Below is a map of the collegiate destinations of Samoan NFL players in the 2000's:

Figure 6



It is easy to see the contrast between this map and those of decades past, but it is the specific locales here that are the most interesting. Due to the sheer increase in the number of Samoan players that debuted in the 2000's, there was significant diversity in the colleges attended for football during this decade. However, the severe majority of these were still in the western part of the United States - particularly where there is a prominent Polynesian population.

Many of these schools, including lesser known schools such as Utah State University or San Diego State University, had sent Samoan players to the NFL in the past. There were, however, many colleges that appear in this demographic that had not appeared in previous decades. They, too, can be explained in the same pattern of familiarity and community that is seen in migratory patterns of previous Samoan players to the NFL. The significance of familiarity and community in a sporting setting is a major factor for athletes. This is described in depth by John Bale, who did a study in 1991 on foreign athletes in American universities. He interviewed many college athletes on their experiences in the American collegiate sports system, including gymnasts from Brazil who agreed that having multiple team members from their own culture significantly increased the quality of their collegiate athletic experience (Bale 1991).

The noticeable anomalies on the map are the schools dotting the middle of the nation including in Indiana, as well as in Florida and Maine. These schools are largely the alma maters of players previously described in this section who grew up in that specific place. Lofa Tatupu went from Massachusetts to Maine for college before moving on to USC. Louis Murphy stayed in his home state of Florida to play for the Gators. Defensive end Roy Miller stayed in Texas to play for the Longhorns. Even out west, the first University of Nevada player, Josh Mauga, grew up less than a hundred miles away from the city. Another geographical anomaly is a familiar one - Michigan State University, where two more players of Samoan descent played before their pro career during this decade.

Despite the large geographical diversity displayed on the map above, the sense of community and familiarity among Samoan football players persisted throughout the decade. The common path taken by Blaine Saipaia and Maugalula Tuitele from southern California to

Colorado State, mirrors paths of previous Samoan players who traveled in droves to similar schools from similar locations. Kansas State University - a school that had never sent a Samoan player to the NFL in a place with little Polynesian history - also succeeded in recruiting two Samoan players in this time period. Both of those players, Mario Fatafehi and Jerry Togiai, played their high school football in Hawai'i, further solidifying the trend of community and familiarity in players' selections of where to play collegiate football.

Interestingly, of the sixty-seven players of Samoan descent during this time period, only six universities had more than two attend their campus. The consistencies seen in past decades regarding Samoan players opting to remain close to home or, at worst, in a nearby area of notable Samoan population began to stray slightly during the 2000's with the advent of new schools attended by the players. Continuing with the racial stacking trends seen previously among the Samoan community, thirty eight of the sixty seven players to make it to the NFL in the 2000's played either offensive or defensive line. The emergence of a sports region among the Samoan community is visible in the spatial diversification of the universities that not only were chosen by the players, but those universities that began to choose a demographic of player (Samoans) that they had not previously recruited.

Toniu Fonoti's suiting up for the University of Nebraska Cornhuskers, and the subsequent ESPN story about his experience in Midwest football, is a great example of how the concept of the sports region can be created. Nebraska, in a state where all Pacific Islanders combined together still make up only 0.1% of the population, began to heavily recruit Samoan players after Fonoti's appearance in Lincoln akin to the Michigan State phenomena with Bob Apisa decades earlier. The heightened awareness of the Samoan football player began to

spatially disperse to colleges across the nation during the 2000's, further promoting the creation of a sports region around football in the Samoan community.

Samoan NFL Players: 2010 - Present

During the six decades from Al Lolotai's 1945 debut for Washington up until the turn of the millennium, there were sixty six players of Samoan descent that made it to the NFL. During the first decade of the 2000's, there were sixty six more. The NFL seasons from 2010 to the present day have continued this upward increase in the number of professional Samoan football players. The trend of racial stacking of Samoan players along the offensive and defensive lines also continued during this time period, in consistency with decades past. The 2010 NFL season saw six more players of Samoan descent make their NFL debuts. All six of those players played on either the offensive or defensive lines. These players came from mainly Hawai'i and California, including the Tutu'ila-born All-Pro Mike Iupati as well as Shaun Lauvao, who continued the trend of players from O'ahu's Farrington High School making it to the NFL. Defensive end Daniel Te'o-Nesheim was born in Pago Pago, American Samoa before attending Hawai'i Preparatory Academy on the Island of Hawai'i. Te'o-Nesheim was the second Samoan NFL player to attend high school in Hawai'i outside of O'ahu, as well as the first to attend high school on the Big Island. Defensive tackle Junior Aumavae was born in American Samoa but graduated from Palmer High School in Alaska, becoming the third Samoan NFL player to play high school football in Alaska.

Utah has had seven Samoan players make their NFL debuts in this decade, continuing its upward trend that started in the early 2000's. Six of those seven played on either the offensive or

defensive line, continuing the pattern of racial stacking seen in previous decades regardless of home state. Perhaps more interesting is that six of those seven also chose to stay in state to attend college at either BYU, Utah State, or the University of Utah. Washington state also continued its upward trend by producing three NFL players of Samoan descent that debuted in 2016 and 2017 alone - more than the number of Samoan players the state produced all the way up through the 1990's. All three of those players - Senio Kelemete, Alameda Ta'amu, and Jonathan Amosa - opted to attend the University of Washington.

Continuing the trend of players staying home for college seen commonly throughout the history of the Samoan football player, two players from Oregon have made it to the NFL since the 2010 season. Both of these players, Jordan Poyer and Isaac Seumalo, attended Oregon State University. Colorado had only seen one previous Samoan NFL player attend high school in the state in defensive lineman Luther Elliss during the 1990's; defensive tackle Mike Purcell became the second when he signed with the San Francisco 49ers as an undrafted free agent out of the University of Wyoming - another example of a player opting to remain relatively close to home when selecting a college.

The 2013 NFL season saw the first Samoan player to attend high school in Kentucky make his NFL debut in offensive lineman Larry Warford. Warford's father was in the US Navy, and Warford grew up in Oceanside, California for some years of his life. Warford subsequently moved to Richmond, Kentucky, where he graduated from Madison Central High School. Warford would choose to remain home and attend the University of Kentucky to play collegiate football. He was subsequently the first Samoan NFL player from Kentucky when he was selected by the Detroit Lions in the 2013 NFL Draft. Linebacker Jake Muasau became the first Samoan

player to attend high school in Arizona when he debuted for the New York Giants in 2012.

Muasau then attended Phoenix College, a local junior college in his area, before moving on to Georgia State University - a unique collegiate destination for a Samoan football player. The use of a junior college as a springboard to a division one school and a subsequent NFL career, however, is a tendency seen commonly in many past Samoan NFL players - especially those from American Samoa itself.

The eight NFL seasons since 2010 have seen six more players debut that went to high school on Tutu'ila, continuing the rise that began in the previous decade. Defensive tackle Isa'ako Aaitui became the first graduate of Faga'itua High School in American Samoa to play in the NFL when he debuted for the Miami Dolphins in 2011. Another Faga'itua graduate, running back Joey Iosefa, came out of the University of Hawai'i to sign with the New England Patriots in 2015. Tafuna High School teammates Destiny Vaeao and Lene Maiava were both signed to NFL contracts in 2016. Two more graduates from Tutu'ila schools were signed to contracts in 2017, as linebacker Rommel Mageo of Samoana High School and safety Shalom Luani of Faga'itua High School signed contracts that season. Luani attended Chabot College in California before transferring to Washington State University, another example of a Samoan player using junior collegiate football as a springboard to a better opportunity in division one. Four players that played high school football in American Samoa have made their NFL debuts in the last two seasons alone. This put the total number of players that have played high school football in American Samoa to be signed to NFL contracts at seventeen. A mere fifteen years ago during the 2002 NFL season, and in the middle of the media frenzy on the Samoan football player, there had only been one player in NFL history to play high school football in American Samoa. The

turning of the twenty first century saw the complete establishment of not only the Samoan Islands, but all of the Samoan diaspora as a sports region for football in the United States.

Overall, fifty four players of Samoan descent have made their NFL debuts in the eight seasons since 2010. California and Hawai‘i led the way again, with seventeen and ten players respectively moving on to the NFL. This decade has seen a significant increase in players from Utah and Washington, two states that had shown gradual increases in player numbers during previous decades. American Samoa also continued to produce NFL players at an incredibly high level considering its population. The most important aspect of the decade following 2010 for the sports region surrounding the Samoan football community, however, lies equally in the cultural portrayal of these Samoan players as it does in the player numbers and diversified migratory patterns.

This decade has featured multiple high profile players of Samoan descent in the NFL. Linebacker Manti Te’o, born and raised in Hawai‘i, was in the media spotlight for a variety of reasons during his Heisman Trophy-caliber season in 2012 for the University of Notre Dame. Also from O‘ahu was defensive lineman DeForest Buckner, who was a highly profiled defensive lineman out of the University Oregon and would be the seventh overall pick in the 2016 NFL Draft. It was the 2015 NFL Draft, however, that truly put Samoan culture on the forefront of the football world for a night.

Quarterback Marcus Mariota out of the University of Oregon was the 2014 Heisman Trophy winner who was born and raised in Hawai‘i. Mariota was a highly rated prospect following his final season in Oregon and ended up being the second overall selection in the 2015 NFL Draft. Also selected in the first round of the 2015 Draft was defensive lineman Danny

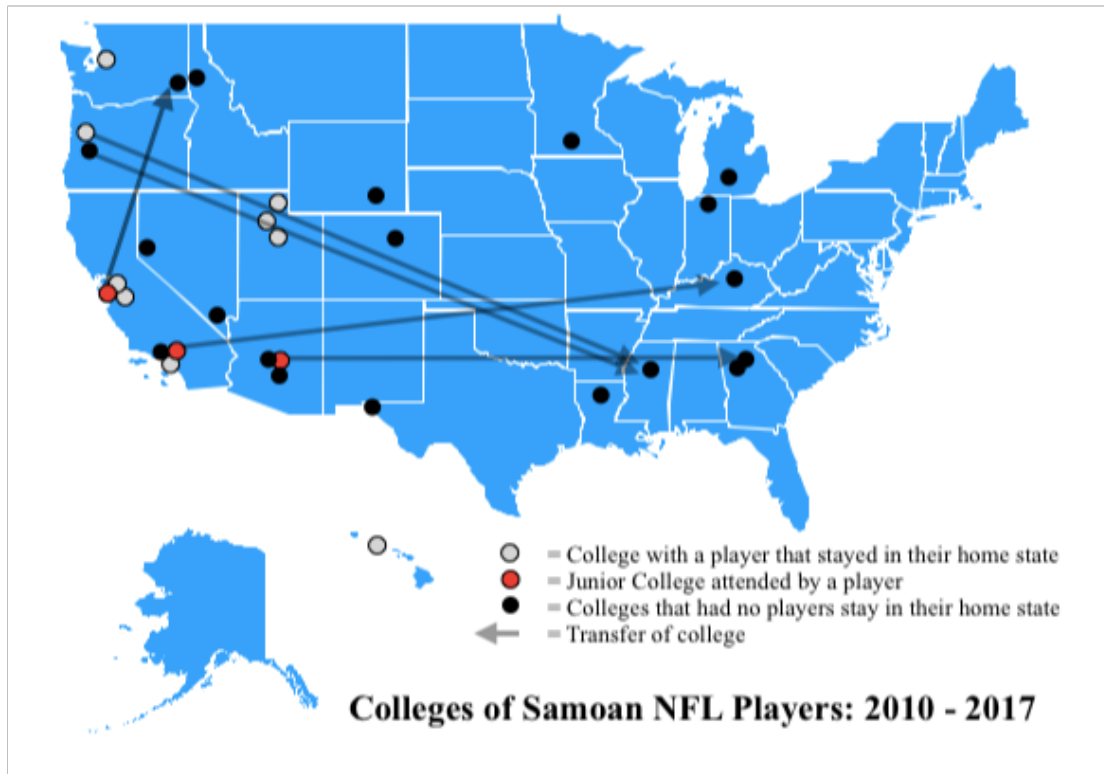
Shelton out of the University of Washington, who was born and raised in Auburn, Washington - a suburb of Seattle. Due to the high selection of two Samoan players, the Samoan culture was a big topic during the 2015 NFL Draft process. Mariota's life in Hawai'i was a frequently profiled story coming up to the draft, and his Samoan background was also a major topic that was highlighted in his Heisman Trophy acceptance speech. Shelton famously donned a lavalava and bear hugged NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell off of his feet as he walked across the stage during the NFL Draft ceremony. The highlighting of Samoan culture in the spotlight of the football world surely solidified the creation of a sports region around the Samoan football community. This narrative briefly came to the forefront again recently, as freshman quarterback Tua Tagovailoa was inserted into the NCAA National Championship Game at halftime for the University of Alabama. Tagovailoa would famously lead his team to a wild comeback victory, prompting a repeat of the fascination surrounding the Samoan quarterback from Hawai'i that encapsulated Mariota a few years earlier. Mariota personally reached out to congratulate Tagovailoa on his victory afterwards. He and Tagovailoa are friends, and have known each other for years as both are graduates of St. Louis High School in Honolulu (Wolfe 2018).

Migratory Patterns of Samoan Football Players: 2010 - Present

The colleges attended by the Samoan players of the NFL from 2010 to the present time represented a wide range of new places and schools not before seen in the demographic, while still containing those that had been an integral part of the Polynesian Pipeline in previous decades. Every university that produced three or more Samoan NFL players during this time was in the western United States, with many being consistent destinations for players in the past such

as USC, BYU, and the University of Washington. Four of the six players that came out of the University of Washington also played high school football in the state, continuing the trend of players staying within their home state for college. Multiple schools produced only one or two Samoan NFL players during this time period (often their first), and many represented areas that are not traditionally associated with Polynesians. Below is a map of the collegiate destinations of Samoan NFL players from 2010 to the present day:

Figure 7



The junior college route taken by many Samoan players in the past also continued in this decade. Players attended schools such as Phoenix College, Los Angeles Harbor Community

College, and Chabot College (all in the western US) before moving on to major division one programs before landing an NFL contract. It is significant to note that one of those players was Shalom Luani, of Faga'itua High School in American Samoa. Many of the graduates of American Samoan high schools in the 2000's had gone on to junior colleges before making the jump to division one schools, and Luani continued this trend to the present day.

This map representing the 2010's has noticeably more variation in the geographic locations of colleges that NFL players of Samoan descent chose to attend than decades past. The University of Notre Dame, in Indiana, sent its first two Samoan players to the NFL during this time period including the aforementioned Manti Te'o. Louisiana Tech, Georgia Tech, and Minnesota State University each had their first Samoan NFL player come through their programs during this decade. The University of Mississippi had two players of Samoan descent transfer in before embarking on a pro career. These players interestingly transferred out of Oregon State University (Rommell Mageo) and the University of Oregon (Jeremiah Masoli) to attend the University of Mississippi. The University of Texas - El Paso had its first Samoan player make an NFL roster in fullback Darrin Laufasa. Michigan State University, as the only historically spatial anomaly in the Polynesian Pipeline, continued to recruit Samoan players during this decade as lineman Fou Fonoti was signed by the San Francisco 49ers in 2014.

Overall, the spatial diversity in colleges attended by Samoan NFL players who debuted after 2010 was the largest by far of any previous decade. Schools in states with little history of Polynesian or Samoan influence, such as Louisiana, Minnesota, or Georgia saw their first Samoan NFL player during this time, while major parts of the Polynesian Pipeline remained intact in the form of USC, BYU, and the University of Washington. The use of junior colleges -

specifically by players from American Samoa itself - represents a significant step in the migratory patterns of these players. As described in the media publications on the topic, players from American Samoa face an increased difficulty in gaining division one scholarships for a variety of reasons not related to the football field, and thus junior college becomes a viable option for many. The fact that this pathway has proven to be successful by multiple players on an island of less than 60,000 is a very significant occurrence. The development of a sports region around the Samoan football community has rapidly escalated in the last two decades, increasing the number of players from American Samoa that have the opportunity to move through the American football system.

Consistencies: Home States & Migratory Patterns

Since Al Lolotai made his NFL debut in 1945, there have been roughly 186 players of Samoan descent signed by NFL teams. These players had varying degrees of success, with some having lengthy and decorated careers as well as enshrinement in the Pro Football Hall of Fame such as Junior Seau. With this increase in player numbers over time, there also came an increase in spatial diversity of their home states. Following this paragraph are two pie charts of the home states of the Samoan NFL players throughout history. The first chart is the home states of those through the 1999 NFL season, while the second is the home states of those from the 2000 - 2017 NFL seasons. Percentages of total players in that given time period is listed next to the home

state, and each key begins with the largest piece of the pie (California in both cases) and goes clockwise:

Figure 8

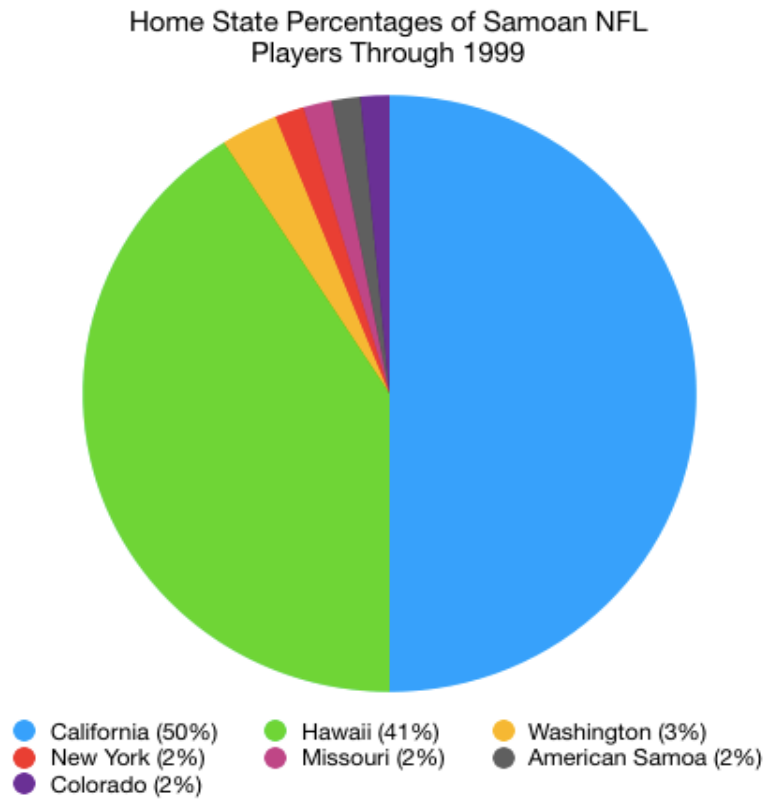
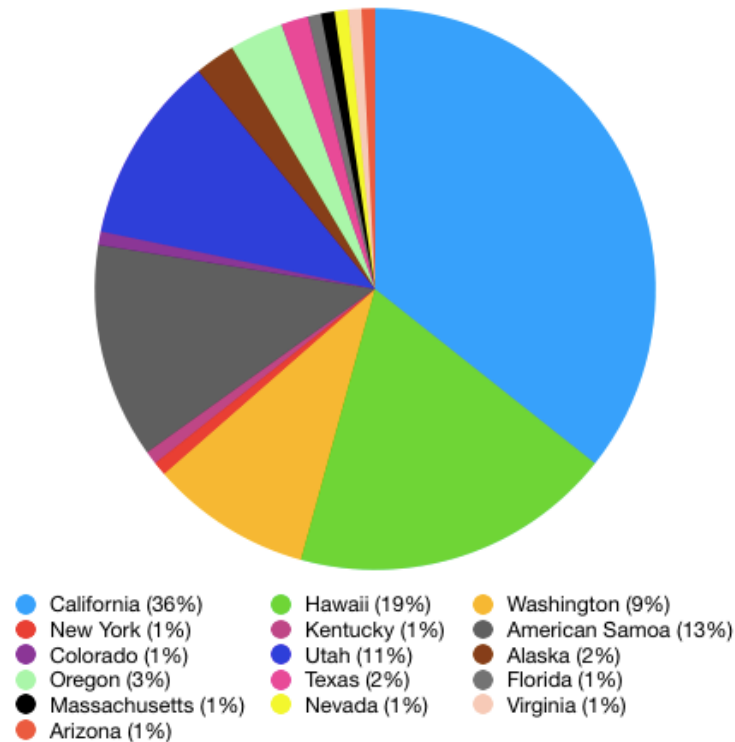


Figure 9

Home State Percentages of Samoan NFL
Players: 2000 - 2017



The increase in spatial variation of home states after the 2000 NFL season is easy to see on these pie charts. While California and Hawai‘i are still the largest home states for Samoan NFL players, the percentage of total players they have produced dropped steadily after 2000 - from 91% prior to 55% in the current century. There have already been 16 different home states for Samoan NFL players this century, a marked increase from the seven that had debuted in the NFL every year prior. These locations have spread across the United States all the way to the east coast in states such as Massachusetts, Florida, and Virginia.

The home states of Samoan players throughout history strongly correlates with the population rankings of states with Polynesian populations. California and Hawai‘i are significantly higher than any other state, with American Samoa significantly increasing its number of NFL players since the 2000 season. Other significant increases are visible in Utah and Washington, two places with prominent Polynesian populations, which are the only other states that produced over ten Samoan players throughout NFL history. Oregon and Alaska, two states with small but notable Polynesian populations, are the only other states to produce more than two Samoan NFL players.

The remaining states have produced two or less NFL players of Samoan descent, and are of a wide variety of locations. The remaining states that are visible in this analyzation have military bases that have largely played a role in the migratory patterns of many Samoan players, as written about by Jesse Markham and Lisa Uperesa (Markham 2008, Uperesa 2014). Many of the players who grew up in the unique home states - such as Ed Stansbury in Texas or Larry Warford in Kentucky - were children of military service members. Others, such as Lofa Tatupu, were the sons of former Samoan NFL players who grew up wherever their father was under contract at the time.

While California and Hawai‘i remain significant as the two most common home states for Samoan players, the data from the current century reveals a much different pattern. American Samoa itself - only having one player attend a high school there from 1945 through 2000 - then saw sixteen more players come through high schools on Tutu‘ila make NFL rosters in the subsequent eighteen NFL seasons. Other states with growing Polynesian populations for various reasons, such as Utah and Washington, saw their numbers jump up at the turn of the century, as

well. In addition, there were unique home states for players in this time period not previously seen in decades past. How, though, do these home states correlate with the migratory patterns chosen by the players? The following maps are of colleges attended by Samoan players that made it to the NFL. The first map is locations of colleges attended up through 1989, while the second map has added the players from the 1990's onto it.

Figure 10

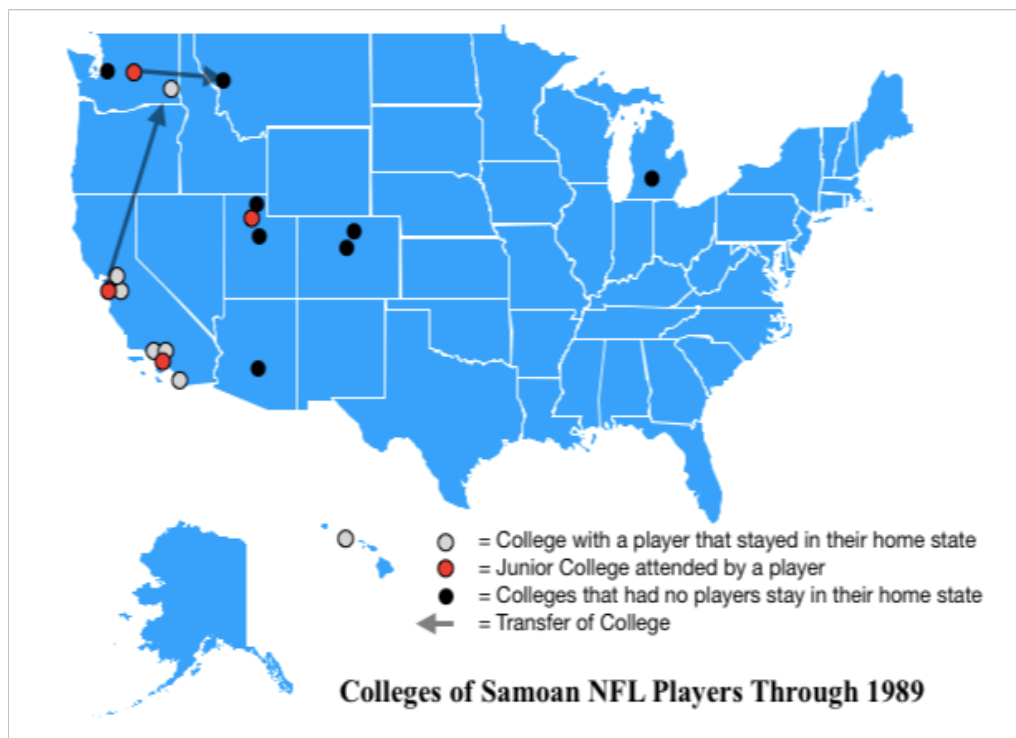
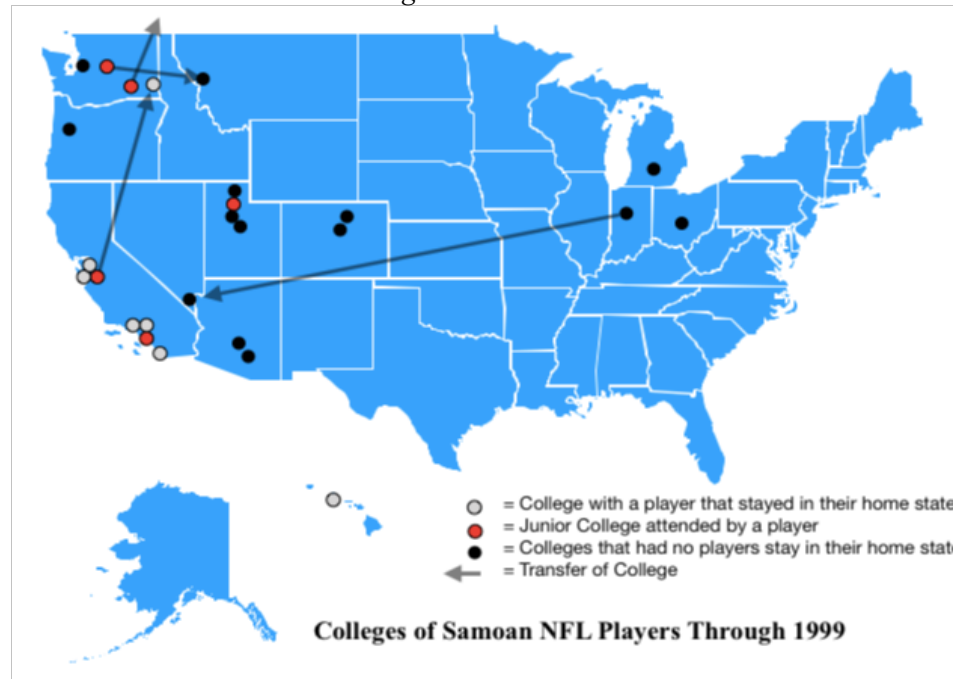
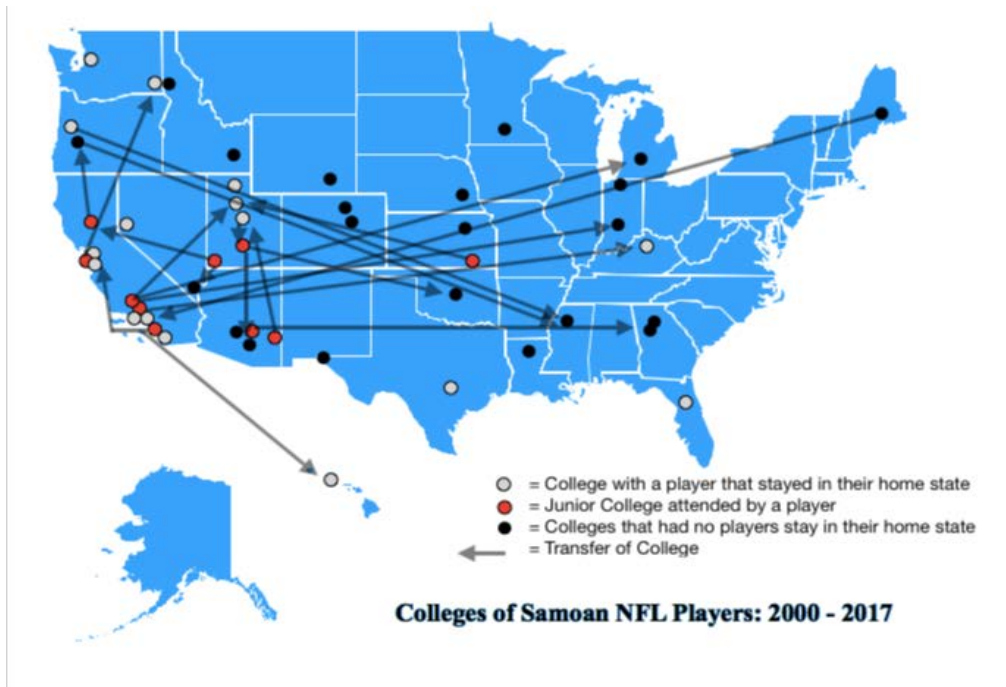


Figure 11



It is easy to see the increased spatial diversity in migratory patterns in the 1990's alone. Michigan State University remains the only constant outside of the western United States, while new locations within the west itself began to be seen in this decade such as Oregon and Nevada. The amount of junior colleges attended by players is also significant, as it has been a common trend among players of Samoan descent throughout history. The amount of players that stayed in their home state, however, is incredibly significant. Following this paragraph is a map of colleges attended by Samoan players from the 2000 season up through 2017:

Figure 12

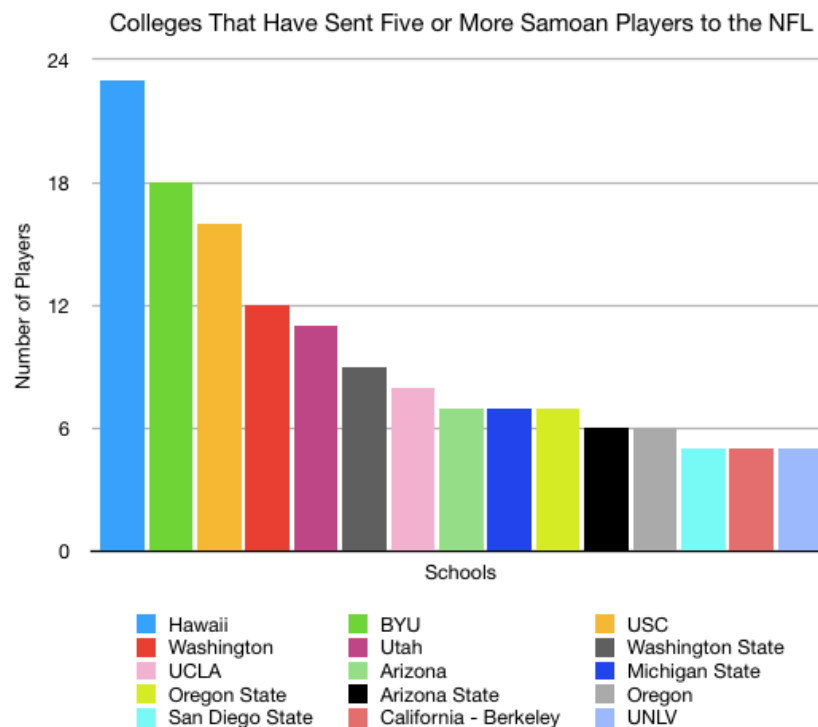


The variation for each type of college has increased both spatially and numerically so far this century. Junior colleges are still incredibly common to use as springboards to a better opportunity - especially for players who went to high school in American Samoa - and their geographic locations begin to diversify in these years, as well. The number of colleges outside of the western United States has increased significantly, for both in state and out of state players. Many unique states, such as Florida and Kentucky, have seen their only Samoan NFL player attend both high school and college in the state - continuing the trend of collegiate selections seen in past decades.

The biggest increase during the last two decades has been the number of schools that recruit out of state Samoan players, as well as their increasingly diverse geographic locations. No

school in the South had ever sent a player of Samoan descent to the NFL prior to 2000. So far this century, four schools have sent Samoan players to the NFL in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Georgia alone. Universities throughout the middle of the country also increased recruitment of Samoan players during this time period, with schools in Indiana, Minnesota, Oklahoma, and Kansas all sending a player of Samoan descent to the NFL. Below is a chart of the universities that have sent five or more players of Samoan descent to the NFL. The chart key moves in chronological order with the graph:

Figure 13



The pattern among the schools located in this chart is that all of them are in the western part of the United States - except one. Michigan State University, in East Lansing, was the

school of Bob Apisa in the 1960's. Although he sadly never got the chance to play in the NFL, his legacy set off a chain reaction that permeated throughout history and culminated in Michigan State being the only school that consistently rosters Samoan football players without being in an area with a notable Polynesian population. The communal aspect and cultural understanding that Michigan State can provide due to its history of rostering Samoan players has clearly gone a long way to increase their ability to recruit those players.

These communal ties are also seen in the University of Hawai'i, located within Polynesia itself. Hawai'i was home to a coach in Dick Tomey who prided himself on bringing in local and other Polynesian talent, and he helped to turn the University of Hawai'i into the top school when it comes to Samoan player destinations. Tomey's presence is also seen in the University of Arizona, where five of the seven total Samoan players there came out of the university while Tomey was the football coach. Other communal ties can be seen in Brigham Young University, with its ties to the LDS Church and its heavy following across Polynesia, produced eighteen Samoan players. The University of Southern California, a popular and well decorated school in Los Angeles of which Charley Ane was an alumni, put up the third highest total. These schools and places are clear nodes in the migratory networks and patterns of Samoan football players, and are major factors in the perception and creation of a sports region around the Samoan football community.

In regards to less popular and junior colleges, the trends explored earlier in this paper remained true. Players of Samoan descent tended to not only remain somewhere near home in a Polynesian-populated area, but many tried to stay as close to home as possible. A large number of the Samoan players in history (17) are from American Samoa itself, and thus cannot stay

home for college even if they wanted to. Many of those players played at a junior college prior to making the jump to a division one school. The statistical anomalies of home states resonated through with player colleges, as well. The lone Samoan to go from the University of Florida to the NFL was wide receiver Louis Murphy - who was born and raised in St. Petersburg, Florida. Roy Miller, who graduated from Shoemaker High School in Killeen, was the only Samoan player to come out of the University of Texas and go to the NFL. Larry Warford was the only Samoan player to graduate high school in Kentucky, and he was also one of only two Samoan players to play for the Kentucky Wildcats. This consistency of Samoan players staying home is not, however, just restricted to small schools. Below are some of the schools with significant numbers of Samoan players from their home state:

- *California* - 3 of 4 players were from California
- *Florida* - the only player that went there was from Florida
- *Kentucky* - one of two players was from Kentucky
- *Hawai'i* - 17 of 23 players were from Hawai'i
- *Oregon State* - 2 of the 7 players were from Oregon
- *San Diego State* - 4 of 5 players were from California
- *San Jose State* - all three players were from California
- *Stanford* - 3 of 4 players were from California
- *Texas* - only player that went to the University of Texas was from Texas
- *UCLA* - 5 of 8 players were from California
- *USC* - 10 of 14 players were from California
- *Utah* - 4 of 10 players were from Utah

- *Utah State* - 2 of 3 players were from Utah
- *Washington* - 6 of 12 players were from Washington

There is a noticeable consistency between home states of players and the collegiate destinations that they select. While there are many colleges that remained constant in rostering of Samoan football players who made it to the NFL, the severe majority of these sit in the western part of the United States - primarily in areas with large populations of Polynesians. The University of Hawai‘i, USC, and the University of Washington all have produced large numbers of Samoan NFL players, and are located in areas with significant populations of Polynesians. Brigham Young University is not only located in Utah - which has a sizable population of Polynesians in its own right - but is the flagship campus for the LDS Church, and thus consistently produces NFL players of Polynesian descent, specifically Samoans.

The consistencies become clearer, however, when examining individual player cases. Many of the players that went to the schools in the eastern United States grew up in those states. Despite that, many players of Samoan descent went to schools far away from their homes and in areas with little Polynesian presence, such as the University of Mississippi, Georgia Tech University and the University of Oklahoma. These schools all had their first Samoan players after the media publications of the early 2000’s, while the schools that had consistently produced Samoan players merely remained constant in their player numbers. By the first decade of this century, the sports region around the Samoan football community had developed strongly. This would continue into the current decade, especially with the significance and recent successes of players like Marcus Mariota, Manti Te’o, and Tua Tagovailoa.

The development of a sports region around the Samoan football community both within the Samoan Islands as well as among Samoan diaspora has seen the spatial diversity of their migratory patterns increase heavily throughout the last two decades. More universities and coaches are seeking out Samoan players for their rosters despite the geographic locale in which they are located. In addition, the trends seen in early migratory patterns continue to remain true while simultaneously branching out to new areas to play collegiate football. The effect of the creation of the sports region around the Samoan football community is visible in the increased variance in migratory patterns, while the major nodes seen within the network itself still form the backbone of the sports region as a whole.

Chapter Seven

Conclusions, Broader Impacts, and Potential Future Implications

The main focus of this thesis was to investigate the question: How has American Samoa emerged as an American football ‘sports region’, and how has media output and mainstream culture attention to the phenomena affected the recruitment and drafting of Samoan players? The finding of this thesis was that the media output of the Polynesian Pipeline phenomena has had a direct correlation with, and therefore effect on, the creation of a sports region around not only American Samoa itself, but the entire Samoan community. The creation of this perceived sports region led to more visibility and large scale recruitment of Samoan football players.

The research undertaken in this project did show that it was not just American Samoa that had emerged as a sports region, it was the Samoan community as a whole. Scholarly works by authors such as Lisa Uperesa and Jesse Markham exemplify the role that Samoan culture has on the migratory pathways and opportunities afforded to that demographic of players (Uperesa 2010 & 2014, Markham 2008, Tengan & Markham 2009). The players largely came from California and Hawai‘i, but the sheer number of players of Samoan descent significantly increased throughout time regardless of home state. The perceived sports region surrounding the entire Samoan culture had a profound effect on the external perception of Samoan players in the eyes of coaches and scouts, as shown by both the increase in player numbers as well as the increased spatial diversity in their migratory patterns throughout history.

The image of the Samoan player portrayed by the media outlets was a factor in the overall creation of the sports region around the Samoan football community. Articles such as the one published in 1976 portrayed them as warriors that “seem to have stepped into the 20th

century from some secret museum of oceanic antiquities” (Johnston 1976). The article’s common use of the words ‘warrior’, ‘family’, and ‘culture’ represent the external perception of the Samoan football player during the time period. This external perception is pivotal in the creation of a sports region, as John Bale notes that sports are often used as a representation of the culture, landscape, and people of the area that they represent (Bale 2002). Shortly thereafter, the biggest jump in the number of Samoan players occurred to date, as 12 players debuted in the 1970’s - largely in the latter half of the decade - before the number of Samoans nearly doubled in the 1980’s to 23. While the 1990’s saw 28 Samoan players, consistent with the 23 seen in the 1980’s, the first decade of the 2000’s saw 66 more players debut. That is a significant increase from not only the previous decade, but in all of NFL history, as only 66 Samoan players had debuted *ever* in the NFL prior to that decade. The current decade, from 2010 to the present day, has already seen 54 players of Samoan descent make it to the NFL. Per the author’s research, twelve players from American Samoa were ranked recruits in the last four years. Surely, dozens more are playing in college football. We are sure to see more Samoan players debut in the coming seasons of the NFL.

Due to the media portrayal examined in chapter three, Samoan football players - who are athletes and can be considered migrant laborers - find themselves in a unique place in the framework of political economy. Samoans often find themselves with limited options for economic or social opportunity in their home islands. Football is seen by many as a path of upward mobility through the global economic system and one of the only ways off the island (Saslow 2007, Uperesa 2010). While American Samoa has been overseen by the United States for the recent past, and life in American Samoa has adjusted accordingly, football players from

American Samoa (and of the Samoan diaspora) have become a hot commodity in the player pool of the American football system. Despite Samoans being a very small percentage of overall population in the United States (and the world), Samoan players jump into the cycle of production and consumption that is the scouting and recruiting pools of the modern American football system - and successfully.

There are clear consistencies in the collegiate destinations of Samoan football players both before and after the solidified creation of a sports region surrounding the Samoan football community in the early twenty first century. Schools located in the western United States - primarily in areas with prominent Polynesian populations such as Hawai‘i, southern California, or the Seattle area - consistently were able to recruit many Samoan players to their football programs. Oftentimes, these players were from the very state in which they attended school, as displayed in depth in chapter four. A prime example of how the community and familial aspects of Samoan culture and life can be found in the long established continuity in migratory patterns of the Polynesian Pipeline. The previously cited sets of Samoan football players who are related by other familial or community ties in some way allowed for connections that provided wider visibility in the eyes of recruiters, coaches, and scouts. This proved more opportunity for upward socioeconomic mobility in the form of a college scholarship or NFL contract. A great example of this would be Michigan State University, and how Bob Apisa’s stardom in the 1960’s forged a pathway for many Samoan players - and other players who played high school football in Hawai‘i - to comfortably relocate to a place where there was little Polynesian influence at all.

The junior college path is a significant one that was taken by many Samoan players throughout history, primarily from the archipelago of American Samoa itself. High schools in

American Samoa are much less well off than their counterparts on the mainland in more than just their football infrastructure, and exposure for players on the islands had been tough to get prior to the explosion of media publications on the topic in the early twenty first century. Players from American Samoa often speak Samoan at home as opposed to English, and often spend much more time involved in familial and community activities and chores than their counterparts on the US mainland. Thus, junior college is often a route taken by many players from American Samoa itself in order to expand their visibility on the recruiting scene while continuing to display their football prowess.

An intriguing note I found in my research is that the many reasons and factors that enable the Polynesian Pipeline are not unique to American Samoa. Of course, the political relationship with the United States and the colonial imposition of American law, society, and customs (including football) is unlike any other part of the world. However, the aspects of life, society, and opportunity in American Samoa are mirrored throughout many places in the world, especially other parts of the Pacific. The research done in this paper can be seen as a parallel for a new, up-and-coming type of player in the world of American football: Tongans. Since Tonga was never colonized formally by any western nation, let alone the United States, it has remained largely out of reach of the tentacles of the American football machine. In recent years, however, the Tongan diaspora in the United States has taken after their Polynesian counterparts in joining the sport of American football - with great success. The number of Tongans in the NCAA and NFL has increased significantly recently, and with much fanfare and attention. Brigham Young University recently offering a scholarship to a Tongan boy who has a rugby background and only participated in football camps (Hein 2015). This even has future implications for Tongan players

that could be seen as a parallel to the Samoan players. This research could not only provide a window into the migratory patterns of the Samoan football player, but also to provide a jumpstart for academic research done on the Tongan football phenomenon that is sure to grace the American football circuit in the coming years.

This thesis combines many aspects and topics of research in sports geography, including racial stacking, identity and perception, sports regions, athlete recruitment, and player migratory patterns. Academic work on the Samoan football player has largely focused on the personal perspectives of the players themselves, and this thesis adds to those works by including a detailed analysis of migratory patterns taken by every Samoan player to ever suit up in the NFL. Attributing the theory of political economy to formation of a sports region around the Samoan community, as well as migratory patterns of Samoan football players, has revealed a deeper understanding of the Polynesian Pipeline; there are many underlying forces at work in these migratory patterns than just level of play on the football field. While many academic works have been done on specific case studies of sports regions, this thesis combined a wide array of evidence — from media portrayals of Samoan players to the physical migratory patterns taken by the players themselves — to analyze the creation and perpetration of a sports region around the entire Samoan football community and its subsequent effect on the players.

All Time Samoan NFL Player Database
Appendix 1

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Al Lolotai	1945	Weber Junior College	Iolani (HI)	Laie, HI	06/22/1920	G	Washington Redskins
Charles Ane	1953-1959	Compton CC/USC	Punahou (HI)	Honolulu, HI	01/25/1931	OL	Detroit Lions
Leo Reed	1961	Colorado State	Kahuku (HI)	Kahuku, HI	01/03/1940	OL	Denver Broncos Houston Oilers
Tu'ufuli Uperesa	1971	Wenatchee Valley College/Montana	Aiea (HI)	American Samoa	01/20/1948	G	Philadelphia Eagles
Jim Nicholson	1974-1981	Michigan State	St. Louis (HI)	Honolulu, HI	02/28/1949	OL	Kansas City Chiefs San Francisco 49ers
Charles 'Kale' Ane III	1975-1981	Michigan State	Punahou (HI)	Los Angeles, CA	04/12/1952	C	Kansas City Chiefs Green Bay Packers
Terry Tautolo	1976-1984	UCLA	Millikan (CA)	Corona, CA	08/30/1954	LB	Philadelphia Eagles San Francisco 49ers Detroit Lions Miami Dolphins
Wilson Faumuina	1977-1981	San Jose State	Balboa (CA)	American Samoa	06/11/1954	DL	Atlanta Falcons
Mekeli Ieremia	1978	BYU	Sleepy Hollow (NY)	Niosafutu, AS	03/04/1954	DT	Buffalo Bills
Keith Uperesa	1978-1980	BYU	Punahou (HI)	Honolulu, HI		OT	Denver Broncos (PS) Oakland Raiders (PS)

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Mosi Tatupu	1978-1991	USC	Punahou (HI)	Pago Pago, AS	04/26/1955	RB	New England Patriots Los Angeles Rams
Toto'a Frank Manumaleuga	1979-1981	San Jose State	Banning (CA)	Laie, HI	05/09/1956	LB	Kansas City Chiefs
Jack Thompson	1979-1984	Washington State	Evergreen (WA)	American Samoa	05/19/1956	QB	Cincinnati Bengals Tampa Bay Buccaneers
Mike Kozlowski	1979-1986	Colorado	San Dieguito (CA)	Newark, NJ	02/24/1956	S	Miami Dolphins
Manu Tuiasosopo	1979-1986	UCLA	Long Beach St. Anthony (CA)	Los Angeles, CA	08/30/1957	DL	Seattle Seahawks San Francisco 49ers
Tom Tuinei	1980	Hawaii	Waianae (HI)	Oceanside, CA	02/21/1958	DT	Detroit Lions
Jerry Scanlan	1980-1981	Hawaii	Iolani (HI)	Honolulu, HI	01/04/1957	TE	Washington Redskins
Samoa Samoa	1981-1982	Washington State	Carson (CA)		09/23/1956		Cincinnati Bengals (PS)
John Tautolo	1982-1983, 1987	UCLA	Millikan (CA)	Long Beach, CA	05/29/1959	G	New England Patriots (PS) New York Giants Los Angeles Raiders
Jesse Sapolu	1983-1997	Hawaii	Farrington (HI)	Samoa	03/10/1961	OL	San Francisco 49ers
Mark Tuinei	1983-1997	Hawaii	Punahou (HI)	Oceanside, CA	03/31/1960	OT	Dallas Cowboys
Mao Mao Niko	1984	San Jose State	Mt. Eden (CA)			G	Denver Broncos (PS)

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Niko Noga	1984-1991	Hawaii	Farrington (HI)	Honolulu, HI	03/01/1962	LB	St. Louis/Arizona Cardinals Detroit Lions
George Achica	1985	USC	San Jose Hill (CA)	American Samoa	12/19/1960	DT	Indianapolis Colts
Taivale 'Junior' Tautalatasi	1986-1989	Chabot College/Washington State	Encinal (CA)	Oakland, CA	03/24/1962	RB	Philadelphia Eagles Dallas Cowboys
Nu'u Fa'aola	1986-1989	Hawaii	Farrington (HI)	Honolulu, HI	01/15/1964	RB	New York Jets Miami Dolphins
David Fonoti	1987	Arizona State	Aiea (HI)				Kansas City Chiefs
Chris Matau	1987	BYU	Carson (CA)				Los Angeles Rams
David Aupiu	1987	BYU	Carson (CA)	Honolulu, HI	02/10/1961	LB	Los Angeles Rams
Casey Tiumalu	1987	BYU	Helix (CA)	San Diego, CA	06/19/1961	RB	Los Angeles Rams
Pete Noga	1987	Hawaii	Farrington (HI)	American Samoa	06/24/1964	LB	St. Louis Cardinals
Navy Tuiasosopo	1987	Utah State	Long Beach Poly (CA)	American Samoa	05/24/1965	C	Los Angeles Rams
Glen Kozlowski	1987-1992	BYU	Carlsbad (CA)	Honolulu, HI	12/31/1962	WR	Chicago Bears
Richard Brown	1987-1996	San Diego State	Westminster (CA)	Samoa	09/21/1965	LB	Los Angeles Rams San Diego Chargers
Dan Saleaumua	1987-1998	Arizona State	National City Sweetwater (CA)	San Diego, CA	11/25/1964	DT	Detroit Lions Kansas City Chiefs Seattle Seahawks

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Al Noga	1988-1994	Hawaii	Farrington (HI)	Fagasa, AS	09/16/1965	DL	Minnesota Vikings Washington Redskins Indianapolis Colts
Ricky Andrews	1989-1990	Washington	University HS (HI)	Samoa	04/14/1966	LB	San Diego Chargers (PS) Seattle Seahawks
Natu Tuatagaloa	1989-1993, 1995	California	San Rafael (CA)	San Francisco, CA	05/25/1966	DE	Cincinnati Bengals Seattle Seahawks Houston Oilers
Junior Seau	1990-2009	USC	Oceanside (CA)	San Diego, CA	01/19/1969	LB	San Diego Chargers Miami Dolphins New England Patriots
Pio Sagapolutele	1991-1997	San Diego State	Maryknoll (HI)	American Samoa	11/28/1969	DT	Cleveland Browns New England Patriots New Orleans Saints
Esera Tuaolo	1991-1999	Oregon State	Don Antonio Lugo (CA)	Honolulu, HI	07/11/1968	DT	Green Bay Packers Minnesota Vikings Jacksonville Jaguars Atlanta Falcons Carolina Panthers

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Lonnie Palelei	1993-1995, 1997-1999	Purdue, UNLV	Blue Springs (MO)	Nu'uuli, AS	10/15/1970	G	Pittsburgh Steelers New York Jets New York Giants Philadelphia Eagles
Ma'a Tanuvasa	1993-2002	Hawaii	Mililani (HI)	Nu'uuli, AS	11/6/1970	DE	Los Angeles Rams Pittsburgh Steelers Denver Broncos San Diego Chargers Atlanta Falcons
Carlson Leomiti	1994-1995	San Diego State	Banning (CA)	Harbor Island, CA		G	Cleveland Browns (PS) Carolina Panthers (PS)
Ta'ase Faumui	1994-1997	Hawaii	Farrington (HI)	Samoa	03/19/1971	DE	Pittsburgh Steelers Oakland Raiders
Arnold Tauese Ale	1994, 1996	UCLA	Carson (CA)	San Pedro, CA	06/17/1970	LB	Kansas City Chiefs San Diego Chargers
Mu Tagoai	1995	Arizona	Punahou (HI)				Kansas City Chiefs (PS)
Don Sasa	1995-1998	Washington State	Long Beach Poly (CA)	American Samoa	09/16/1972	DT	San Diego Chargers Washington Redskins Carolina Panthers Detroit Lions

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Sale Isaia	1995-2000	UCLA	Oceanside (CA)	Honolulu, HI	06/13/1972	G	Cleveland Browns Baltimore Ravens Indianapolis Colts (PS) Oakland Raiders (PS) New England Patriots
Luther Elliss	1995-2004	Utah	Mancos (CO)	Mancos, CO	03/22/1973	DT	Detroit Lions Denver Broncos
Mike Ulufale	1996	BYU	Campbell (HI)	Honolulu, HI	02/01/1972	DL	Dallas Cowboys
Pat Kesi	1996-1997	Washington	Farrington (HI)	American Samoa	09/10/1973	OT	Oakland Raiders (PS) Green Bay Packers Philadelphia Eagles
Morris Unutoa	1996-2002	BYU	Carson (CA)	Torrance, CA	03/10/1971	C	Philadelphia Eagles Tampa Bay Buccaneers Buffalo Bills
Tony Banks	1996-2005	Michigan State	Hoover (CA)	San Diego, CA	04/05/1973	QB	St. Louis Rams Baltimore Ravens Dallas Cowboys (PS) Washington Redskins Houston Texans
Pulu Poumele	1997	Arizona	Oceanside (CA)	Oceanside, CA	01/31/1972	OL	San Diego Chargers
Nicky Sualua	1997-1999	Ohio State	Mater Dei (CA)	Santa Ana, CA	04/16/1975	FB	Dallas Cowboys Cincinnati Bengals (PS)

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Ink Aleaga	1997-1999	Washington	Maryknoll (HI)	Honolulu, HI	04/27/1973	LB	New Orleans Saints
Van Tuinei	1997-2000	Arizona	Westminster (CA)	Garden Grove, CA	02/16/1971	DE	San Diego Chargers Indianapolis Colts Chicago Bears
Spencer Reid	1998-1999	BYU	Leone (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	02/08/1976	LB	Carolina Panthers Indianapolis Colts
Pene Talamaivao	1998-2000	Utah	Ganesha (CA)		06/14/1975	DT	San Diego Chargers (PS)
Mike Sellers	1998-2001, 2004-2011	Walla Walla CC (WA) - played in Canada after before getting NFL contract	Lacey North Thurston (WA)	Frankfurt, Germany	07/21/1975	FB	Washington Redskins Cleveland Browns
Chris Fuamatu-Ma'afala	1998-2004	Utah	St. Louis (HI)	Honolulu, HI	03/04/1977	FB	Pittsburgh Steelers Jacksonville Jaguars
Joe Salave'a	1998-2006	Arizona	Oceanside (CA)	Leone, AS	03/23/1975	DT	Tennessee Oilers/Titans Baltimore Ravens San Diego Chargers Washington Redskins
Itula Mili	1998-2007	BYU	Kahuku (HI)	Kahuku, HI	04/20/1973	TE	Seattle Seahawks
Joe Tuipala	1999-2003, 2005	San Diego State	Sherman E. Burroughs (CA)	Honolulu, HI	09/13/1976	LB	New Orleans Saints (PS) Jacksonville Jaguars Washington Redskins (PS)

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Edwin Mulitalo	1999-2008	Arizona	Daly City Jefferson (CA)	Daly City, CA	09/01/1974	G	Baltimore Ravens Detroit Lions
Mao Tosi	2000-2001	Idaho	East Anchorage (AK)	Manu'a, AS	12/12/1976	DT	Arizona Cardinals
Maugaula 'Ula' Tuitele	2000-2002, 2004	Colorado State	Pacific (CA)	Torrance, CA	05/26/1978	LB	New England Patriots Tampa Bay Buccaneers (PS) Buffalo Bills Oakland Raiders
Junior Ioane	2000-2005	Snow College (UT)/Arizona State	North Sanpete (UT)	Mount Pleasant, UT	07/21/1977	DT	Oakland Raiders Houston Texans
Blaine Saipaia	2000-2007	Colorado State	Channel Islands (CA)	San Diego, CA	08/25/1978	OL	New Orleans Saints Tennessee Titans (PS) Oakland Raiders Denver Broncos (PS) St. Louis Rams Detroit Lions
Saul Patu	2001-2002	Oregon	Rainier Beach (WA)	Seattle, WA	06/08/1978	DE	New York Jets New England Patriots Tennessee Titans
Setema Gali	2001-2003	BYU	Orem Mountain View (UT)	Orem, UT	07/02/1976	DE	New England Patriots

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Mario Fatafehi	2001-2004	Kansas State	Farrington (HI)	Chicago, IL	01/27/1979	DT	Arizona Cardinals Carolina Panthers Denver Broncos
Pita Elisara	2001-2004	Palomar College (CA)/Indiana	Tafuna (AS)	Ili'i, AS	11/16/1976	OL	New York Giants (PS) Philadelphia Eagles (PS) Baltimore Ravens (PS) Washington Redskins (PS)
Tupe Peko	2001-2006	Michigan State	La Serna (CA)	Whittier, CA	09/19/1978	G	New York Jets (PS) Seattle Seahawks (PS) Houston Texans (PS) Indianapolis Colts Carolina Panthers (PS) Green Bay Packers (PS)
Marques Tuiasosopo	2001-2008	Washington	Woodinville (WA)	Long Beach, CA	03/22/1979	QB	Oakland Raiders New York Jets
Brandon Manumaleuna	2001-2010	Arizona State	Narbonne Harbor City (CA)	Torrance, CA	01/04/1980	TE/FB	St. Louis Rams San Diego Chargers Chicago Bears
Jerry Togiati	2002	Kansas State	Kahuku (HI)	Laie, HI	08/02/1975	DT	Atlanta Falcons (PS)
Ed Elisala Stansbury	2002	UCLA	Irvin (TX)	El Paso, TX	05/03/1979	FB	Houston Texans
Faasea Mailo	2002	USC	Kahuku (HI)	Torrance, CA	02/11/1978	G	New York Jets (PS)

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Ed Ta'amu	2002	Utah	Iolani (HI)	Honolulu, HI	11/08/1979	OL	Minnesota Vikings (PS) Houston Texans (PS)
Tupo Tuupo	2002	Washington State	Menlo-Atherton (CA)				San Diego Chargers (PS)
Justin Ena	2002-2005	BYU	Shelton (WA)	Provo, UT	11/20/1977	LB	Philadelphia Eagles Tennessee Titans
Anton Palepoi	2002-2007	Dixie State (UT)/UNLV	Hunter (UT)	American Samoa	01/19/1978	DE	Seattle Seahawks Denver Broncos Arizona Cardinals New Orleans Saints
Anthony Weaver	2002-2008	Notre Dame	Saratoga Springs (NY)	Killeen, TX	07/28/1980	DL	Baltimore Ravens Houston Texans
Toniu Fonoti	2002-2009	Nebraska	Kahuku (HI)	American Samoa	11/26/1981	G	San Diego Chargers Minnesota Vikings Tampa Bay Buccaneers (PS) Miami Dolphins Atlanta Falcons (PS) Carolina Panthers (PS) Detroit Lions (PS)
Vince Manuwai	2002-2010, 2012	Hawaii	Farrington (HI)	Honolulu, HI	07/12/1980	OG	Jacksonville Jaguars Atlanta Falcons (PS)

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Talifala Atoe	2003	Idaho	Dalles (OR)				Arizona Cardinals (PS)
Matt Leonard	2003	Stanford	Palmdale (CA)	Ague Dulce, CA			Jacksonville Jaguars
Malaefou MacKenzie	2003	USC	Mission Viejo Capistrano (CA)	Samoa	07/24/1979	FB	Jacksonville Jaguars
Gabe Reid	2003-2006	BYU	Leone (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	05/28/1977	TE/FB	Chicago Bears
Lauvale Sape	2003-2007	Utah	Leileihua (HI)	American Samoa	08/29/1980	DT	Buffalo Bills Oakland Raiders (PS) Tennessee Titans (PS)
Pisa Tinoisamoa	2003-2010	Hawaii	Vista (CA)	Oceanside, CA	07/15/1981	LB	St. Louis Rams Chicago Bears
Wayne Hunter	2003-2012, 2015	Hawaii	Radford (HI)	Honolulu, HI	07/02/1981	OT	Seattle Seahawks Jacksonville Jaguars New York Jets St. Louis Rams Buffalo Bills (PS)
Troy Polamalu	2003-2014	USC	Winston Douglas (OR)	Garden Grove, CA	04/19/1981	S	Pittsburgh Steelers
Junior Siavii	2004-2010	Dixie State /Butte Community College (CA)/Oregon	Tafuna (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	11/14/1978	DT	Kansas City Chiefs Dallas Cowboys Seattle Seahawks

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Isaac Sopoaga	2004-2014	College of the Canyons (CA)/Hawaii	Samoana (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	09/04/1981	DT	San Francisco 49ers Philadelphia Eagles New England Patriots Arizona Cardinals
Malcolm Floyd	2004-2015	Wyoming	West Sacramen to River City (CA)	Sacramento, CA	09/08/1981	WR	San Diego Chargers
Lenny Vandermade	2005	USC	Mater Dei (CA)		01/03/1981	OT	Baltimore Ravens (PS) Pittsburgh Steelers (PS)
Zach Tuiaosopo	2005-2006	Washington	Woodinville (WA)	Woodinville, WA	12/19/1981		Pittsburgh Steelers Oakland Raiders
Shaun Nua	2005-2008	Eastern Arizona Junior College/BY U	Tafuna (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	05/22/1981	DE	Pittsburgh Steelers Buffalo Bills
Lofa Tatupu	2005-2010	Maine, USC	King Philip Regional (MA)	San Diego, CA	11/15/1982	LB	Seattle Seahawks
Jonathan Fanene	2005-2012	College of the Canyons (CA)/Utah	Tafuna (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	03/19/1982	DE	Cincinnati Bengals New England Patriots (PS)
Kili Lefotu	2006-2007	Arizona	Arlington (CA)	Honolulu, HI	11/23/1983	G	Washington Redskins
Chris Pino	2006-2007	San Diego State	El Camino (CA)	Guantanamo Bay, Cuba	08/18/1982	OL	Washington Redskins Baltimore Ravens

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Tui Alailefaleula	2006-2007	Washington	Bartlett (AK)	Anchorage, AK	11/05/1982	OT	New York Giants New York Jets
Fred Matua	2006-2008	USC	Banning (CA)	Wilmington, CA	01/14/1984	OG	Detroit Lions (PS) Tennessee Titans (PS) Cleveland Browns Washington Redskins (PS)
Domata Peko	2006-Present	College of the Canyons (CA)/Michigan State	Samoana (AS)	Los Angeles, CA	11/27/1984	DT	Cincinnati Bengals Denver Broncos
Jake Kuresa	2007	BYU	Mountain Crest (UT)	Millville, UT	10/02/1983	OL	New Orleans Saints (PS)
Leonard Peters	2007	Hawaii	Kahuku (HI)	Fagaalu, AS	12/26/1981	S	Chicago Bears (PS)
Nate Ilaoa	2007	Hawaii	Stafford North (VA)	Oakland, CA	04/04/1983	RB	Philadelphia Eagles (PS)
Palauni Ma Sun	2007	Oregon	Kahuku (HI)	Pago Pago, AS	12/21/1985	OT	Washington Redskins
Paul Soliai	2007 - Present	Coffeyville CC (KS), Utah	Nuuuli Poly Tech (AS)	Santa Ana, CA	12/30/1983	DT	Miami Dolphins Atlanta Falcons Carolina Panthers
Tala Esera	2007-2008	Hawaii	Kahuku (HI)	Honolulu, HI	06/15/1984	OG	Miami Dolphins (PS)
Melila Purcell	2007-2008	Hawaii	Leone (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	02/05/1984	DL	Cleveland Browns

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Reagan Maui'a	2007-2008, 2010-2012	Hawaii	Tokay (CA)	American Samoa	07/06/1984	FB	Miami Dolphins Cincinnati Bengals Arizona Cardinals
Nu'u Tafisi	2007-2009	Mt. San Antonio CC (CA), California	Salt Lake City East (UT)	Samoa	06/30/1981	DE	Seattle Seahawks
Brian Soi	2007-2009	Utah State	Timpview (UT)	Honolulu, HI	05/03/1985	DT	Miami Dolphins (PS) New York Giants (PS) Green Bay Packers
Pago Togafau	2007-2011	Idaho State	Long Beach Poly (CA)	Long Beach, CA	01/10/1984	LB	Arizona Cardinals Philadelphia Eagles New Orleans Saints (PS) Tennessee Titans (PS)
CJ Ah You	2007-2012	BYU/Snow College/Okla homa	Highland (UT)	La Habra, CA	07/07/1982	DE	Buffalo Bills (PS) St. Louis Rams
Matt Toeaina	2007-2012	Oregon	Samoana (AS)	San Francisco, CA	10/09/1984	DT	Cincinnati Bengals Chicago Bears
Samson Satele	2007-2014	Hawaii	Kailua (HI)	Kailua, HI	11/29/1984	C	Miami Dolphins Oakland Raiders Indianapolis Colts
Ropati Pitoitua	2008-2015	Washington State	Clover Park (WA)	Samoa	04/06/1985	DE	New York Jets Kansas City Chiefs Tennessee Titans

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Louis Murphy	2009 - Present	Florida	Lakewood (FL)	St. Petersburg, FL	05/11/1987	WR	Oakland Raiders Carolina Panthers New York Giants Tampa Bay Buccaneers San Francisco 49ers
Josh Mauga	2009 - Present	Nevada	Churchill County (NV)	Fallon, NV	06/20/1987	LB	New York Jets Kansas City Chiefs
Roy Miller	2009 - Present	Texas	Killeen Shoemaker (TX)	Fort Lewis, WA	07/09/1987	DE	Tampa Bay Buccaneers Jacksonville Jaguars Kansas City Chiefs
Rey Maualuga	2009 - Present	USC	Eureka (CA)	Fort Sill, OK	01/20/1987	LB	Cincinnati Bengals
Al Afolabi	2009-2010, 2012	Oregon State	Kahuku (HI)	Laie, HI	01/20/1987	S	Chicago Bears Indianapolis Colts Tennessee Titans
Frank Summers	2009-2010, 2013-2014	UNLV	Oakland Skyline (CA)	Oakland, CA	09/06/1985	FB	Pittsburgh Steelers Buffalo Bills
Kahlil Bell	2009-2013	UCLA	Marin Catholic (CA)	Santa Rosa, CA	12/10/1986	RB	Minnesota Vikings (PS) Chicago Bears New York Jets Green Bay Packers

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Will Ta'ufu'ou	2009-2014	California	Mountain View (CA)	Redwood City, CA	06/19/1986	FB	Chicago Bears (PS) Cleveland Browns (PS) Denver Broncos (PS) Tennessee Titans (PS) Jacksonville Jaguars
Kaluka Maiava	2009-2014	USC	Baldwin (HI)	Honolulu, HI	12/27/1986	LB	Cleveland Browns Oakland Raiders
Shawn Lauvao	2010 - Present	Arizona State	Farrington (HI)	Honolulu, HI	10/26/1987	G	Cleveland Browns Washington Redskins
Tyson Alualu	2010 - Present	California	St. Louis (HI)	Honolulu, HI	05/12/1987	DE	Jacksonville Jaguars Pittsburgh Steelers
Mike Iupati	2010 - Present	Idaho	Anaheim Western (CA)	Vaitogi, AS	05/12/1987	G	San Francisco 49ers Arizona Cardinals
Daniel Te'o-Nesheim	2010-2013	Washington	Hawaii Preparatory Academy (HI)	Pago Pago, AS	06/12/1987	DE	Philadelphia Eagles Tampa Bay Buccaneers
Martin Tevaseu	2010-Present	UNLV	Boonville Anderson Valley (CA)	Oakland, CA	10/07/1987	DT	Cleveland Browns (PS) New York Jets Indianapolis Colts
Junior Aumavae	2010, 2013	Minnesota State	Palmer (AK)	American Samoa	04/29/1986	DT	Dallas Cowboys (PS) New York Jets (PS)

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Jeremiah Masoli	2011	Oregon/Ole Miss	St. Louis (HI)	San Francisco, CA	08/24/1988	QB	San Francisco 49ers (PS)
Sealver Siliga	2011	Utah	Copper Hills (UT)	West Jordan, UT	04/26/1990	DT	San Francisco 49ers (PS) Denver Broncos Seattle Seahawks New England Patriots Tampa Bay Buccaneers
Matt Asiata	2011 - Present	Utah	Hunter (UT)	Garden Grove, CA	07/24/1987	RB	Minnesota Vikings Seattle Seahawks Detroit Lions
Vai Taua	2011-2012	Nevada	Cabrillo (CA)	Fountain Valley, CA	10/11/1988	RB	Buffalo Bills (PS) Seattle Seahawks (PS)
DeQuin Evans	2011-2013	Los Angeles Harbor College (CA), Kentucky	Kilpatrick (CA)	Long Beach, CA	05/17/1987	DL	Cincinnati Bengals (suspended often)
Vic So'oto	2011-2014	BYU	Carlsbad (CA)	Oceanside, CA	04/19/1987	DL	Green Bay Packers Oakland Raiders Washington Redskins Arizona Cardinals New Orleans Saints (PS) Pittsburgh Steelers (PS)

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Isa'ako Aaitui	2011-2015	UNLV	Faga'itua (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	07/25/1987	DT	Miami Dolphins New York Jets (PS) New Orleans Saints (PS) Washington Redskins (PS) Tennessee Titans (PS)
Jordan Cameron	2011-2016	USC	Newbury Park (CA)	Los Angeles, CA	08/07/1988	TE	Cleveland Browns Miami Dolphins
Senio Kelemete	2012 - Present	Washington	Evergreen (WA)	Seattle, WA	05/10/1990	G	Arizona Cardinals New Orleans Saints
Vaughn Meatoga	2012-2013	Hawaii	Kamehameha (HI)	Kalaheo, HI	08/19/1989	DT	Redskins & Bengals? Double check this.
Jake Muasau	2012-2013	Phoenix College (AZ), Georgia State	Buena (AZ)		04/05/1990	LB	New York Giants (PS)
Alameda Ta'amu	2012-2014, 2016	Washington	Rainier Beach (WA)	Alameda, CA	08/23/1990	DT	Pittsburgh Steelers Arizona Cardinals Kansas City Chiefs (PS) Buffalo Bills (PS)
Chris Owusu	2012-2015	Stanford	Oaks Christian (CA)	Oxnard, CA	01/06/1990	WR	Tampa Bay Buccaneers New York Jets
Matthew Masifilo	2012-2016	Stanford	Campbell (HI)	Ewa Beach, HI	10/01/1989	C	Tampa Bay Buccaneers Carolina Panthers (PS)

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Colby Cameron	2013	Louisiana Tech	Newbury Park (CA)	Newbury Park, CA	04/05/1990	QB	Carolina Panthers (Preseason)
Jonathan Amosa	2013	Washington	Rainier Beach (WA)		10/16/1990	RB/FB	Green Bay Packers (PS)
Brian Schwenke	2013 - Present	California	Oceanside (CA)	Honolulu, HI	03/22/1991	C	Tennessee Titans Indianapolis Colts
Larry Warford	2013 - Present	Kentucky	Madison Central (KY)	San Diego, CA	06/18/1991	G	Detroit Lions New Orleans Saints
Jordan Poyer	2013 - Present	Oregon State	Astoria (OR)	Dallas, OR	04/25/1991	S	Philadelphia Eagles Cleveland Browns Buffalo Bills
Levine Toilolo	2013 - Present	Stanford	Helix (CA)	San Diego, CA	07/30/1991	TE	Atlanta Falcons
Mike Purcell	2013 - Present	Wyoming	Highlands Ranch (CO)	Denver, CO	04/20/1991	DT	San Francisco 49ers Los Angeles Rams
Manti Te'o	2013-Present	Notre Dame	Punahou (HI)	Laie, HI	01/26/1991	LB	San Diego Chargers New Orleans Saints
Eathyn Manumaleuna	2014	BYU	Timpview (UT)	Anchorage, AK		DT	New York Giants (PS) New England Patriots (PS)
Fou Fonoti	2014	Michigan State	Mayfair (CA)	Lakewood, CA	11/15/91	OL	San Francisco 49ers

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Kona Schwenke	2014 - 2015	Notre Dame	Kahuku (HI)	San Jose, CA	03/11/1992	G	Kansas City Chiefs (PS) New England Patriots (PS) New York Jets (PS) Oakland Raiders (PS) Seattle Seahawks (PS)
Scott Crichton	2014 - 2017	Oregon State	Foss (WA)	Tacoma, WA	10/30/1991	DE	Minnesota Vikings Buffalo Bills (failed physical)
Xavier Su'a-Filo	2014 - Present	UCLA	Timpview (UT)	American Fork, UT	01/01/1991	G	Houston Texans
Tenny Palepoi	2014 - Present	Utah	Skyline (UT)	Salt Lake City, UT	12/19/1990	DT	San Diego Chargers
DJ Tialavea	2014 - Present	Utah State	West Jordan (UT)		07/27/1991	OT	Jacksonville Jaguars (PS) Buffalo Bills (PS) Atlanta Falcons
Joey Iosefa	2015	Hawaii	Faga'itua (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	06/19/1991	FB	Tampa Bay Buccaneers (PS) New England Patriots
Marcus Mariota	2015 - Present	Oregon	St. Louis (HI)	Honolulu, HI	10/30/1993	QB	Tennessee Titans
Danny Shelton	2015 - Present	Washington	Auburn (WA)	Auburn, WA	08/20/1993	DT	Cleveland Browns
John Timu	2015 - Present	Washington	Long Beach Jordan (CA)		08/27/1992	LB	Chicago Bears
Lene Maiava	2016	Arizona	Tafuna (AS)	American Samoa		T	Seattle Seahawks (PS/IR)

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Ian Seau	2016 - Present	Nevada	La Costa Canyon (CA)	Oceanside, CA	12/04/1992	DE	Los Angeles Rams (PS) Buffalo Bills
DeForest Buckner	2016 - Present	Oregon	Punahou (HI)	Waianae, HI	03/17/1994	DT	San Francisco 49ers
Isaac Seumalo	2016 - Present	Oregon State	Corvallis (OR)	Honolulu, HI	10/29/1993	OG	Philadelphia Eagles
Kyle Peko	2016 - Present	Oregon State	La Habra (CA)	La Habra, CA	07/23/1993	NT	Denver Broncos
Su'a Cravens	2016 - Present	USC	Vista Murrieta (CA)	Los Angeles, CA	07/07/1995	S/LB	Washington Redskins
Destiny Vaeao	2016 - Present	Washington State	Tafuna (AS)	American Samoa	01/15/1994	DT	Philadelphia Eagles
Soma Vainuku	2016-2017	USC	Eureka (CA)	Eureka, CA	05/28/1992	FB	Houston Texans (PS) Atlanta Falcons (PS)
Kai Nacua	2017 - Present	BYU	Liberty (NV)	Las Vegas, NV	03/03/1995	S	Cleveland Browns (PS)
Shalom Luani	2017 - Present	Chabot College (CA)/Washington State	Faga'itua (AS)	Pago Pago, AS	08/05/1994	S	Oakland Raiders
Sefo Liufau	2017 - Present	Colorado	Bellarmino (WA)	Tacoma, WA	10/29/1994	QB	Tampa Bay Buccaneers
JuJu Smith-Schuster	2017 - Present	USC	Long Beach Poly (CA)	Long Beach, CA	11/22/1996	WR	Pittsburgh Steelers
Isaac Asiata	2017 - Present	Utah	Spanish Fork (UT)	Spanish Fork, UT	12/29/1992	OG	Miami Dolphins
Darrin Laufasa	2017 - Present	UTEP	Bothell (WA)	American Samoa	05/06/1995	FB	Cincinnati Bengals (Preseason only so far)

Player Name	NFL Seasons	College	High School	Birthplace	Birthdate	Position	NFL Teams Played For
Rommel Mageo	2017	Oregon State, Ole Miss	Samoana (AS)	Pago Pago, AS		LB	Washington Redskins

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